

Ward 19 - Beaches-East York

Responding Candidates:

[Syeda Jaana Ali](#)

[James Dann](#)

[Adam Smith](#)

[Austin Vieira](#)

[Jeff Wahl](#)

[Jennie Worden](#)

Syeda Jaana Ali

Questions

Responses

1. As Councillor, I will advocate for staff to meaningfully fulfill the directions given by Council as part of the 2025 Off-Leash Strategy

Strongly agree

2. As Councillor, I will support fencing and enforcement where needed to ensure that Environmentally Significant Areas and community green spaces are protected from illegal off-leash activity.

Strongly agree

3. I believe that education alone can be the solution to the City's off-leash dog challenges.

Neither agree nor disagree
I perceive the first attempt should be warning as second time offenders than should be penalized.

4. I believe that increased by-law patrols and ticketing are needed to deter off-leash activity.

Strongly agree

5. As Councillor, I will support by-law officers having Special Constable status to give officers the authority to require ID and to facilitate the enforcement of all by-laws, including off-leash by-laws.

Strongly agree

6. As future Councillor, what are you prepared to do to improve off-leash areas so that they are more likely to be used in a responsible manner by dog owners?

A fine should be imposed when the dog owners do not act responsibly. And the people witnessing any such activity should be able to identify and escalate the issue to a hotline.

7. Even where off-leash areas exist, we see illegal off-leash activity in adjacent parkland. Taxpayers fund the installation of new dog parks (at a current estimated budget of \$535,000 per park) and the maintenance of existing off-leash parks (\$9.5 million budgeted over the next 10 years) but the City has not included specific additional funds for off-leash enforcement as directed by Council. As Councillor, how would you address this discrepancy? (City of Toronto, General Manager, Parks and Recreation, 2025)	My position is simple: if taxpayers are paying to build and maintain off-leash areas, the City also has to make sure the rules are actually enforced. It doesn't make sense to invest approximately \$535,000 in a new off-leash area and millions more in maintaining these facilities, while leaving residents to deal with illegal off-leash activity in surrounding parks. As Councillor, I would push for three things. First, fund enforcement where the problem exists. Council has already directed the City to include resources for ticketing and enforcement. I would make sure those resources are actually allocated and targeted to parks with persistent complaints and repeat violations—not simply spread too thinly across the city. Second, measure results. Residents deserve to know whether enforcement is working. I would support publicly reporting patrols, warnings, tickets, charges and repeat problem locations, as Council has already requested. Third, combine enforcement with education and better park planning. Responsible dog ownership should be encouraged, and residents need convenient, properly maintained off-leash areas. But education cannot replace enforcement when people repeatedly ignore the rules. Toronto's parks belong to everyone—dog owners, families, seniors, children and people who simply want to enjoy a park safely. We need to protect that shared space while making sure taxpayer investments deliver the benefits they were intended to provide. My approach would be: build it, maintain it, enforce it—and be transparent with residents about the results.
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8. Based on the City's estimate of over 600,000 dogs in the City of Toronto, (City of Toronto, General Manager, Parks and Recreation) and the number of licenses issued, only 8-11% of Toronto dogs are licensed (City of Toronto, Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards). The money from licensing supports Toronto's Animal Shelters and could be used to support improving off-leash areas and providing support for by-law enforcement. As City Councillor, how important do you think dog licensing is and what are your ideas to improve licensing rates?	Dog licensing is very important. If we have hundreds of thousands of dogs in Toronto but only a small percentage are licensed, we have a significant compliance gap. Licensing matters because it helps reunite lost dogs with their owners, supports Toronto Animal Services and provides the City with better information to plan animal services. The City currently directs 100% of pet-licensing fees toward animal services, including sheltering, veterinary care, spay/neuter programs, rescue services and returning lost pets home. But I don't think the answer is simply to increase fines. We need to make licensing easier, more visible and more valuable to responsible dog owners. As Councillor, I would focus on four things: First, make licensing part of everyday dog ownership. I would support stronger outreach through veterinarians, pet stores, shelters, dog parks, condominium buildings and community organizations so that new dog owners understand that licensing is a legal requirement. Second, make enforcement smarter. The City already has a system for reporting unlicensed animals, and failing to license can result in a ticket. I would support targeted enforcement in areas where there are persistent compliance problems rather than relying primarily on complaints. Third, give dog owners a reason to license. The City already has its BluePaw Rewards program. I would expand partnerships with local businesses and pet-service providers so licensed dog owners receive meaningful benefits. Licensing should feel like being part of a responsible pet-owner community—not just paying a fee. Finally, I would connect licensing to better services. If we successfully increase licensing, that additional revenue should help strengthen Toronto Animal Services and, where appropriate within City budget rules, support the
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infrastructure and enforcement that dog owners and other park users need—including better-maintained off-leash areas and effective by-law enforcement.

Toronto's parks are shared spaces. Responsible dog owners should have access to good facilities, and everyone using our parks should be able to enjoy them safely.

My goal would be simple: more dogs licensed, better animal services, better enforcement, and better parks—without making responsible pet ownership unaffordable.

James Dann	
Questions	Responses
1. As Councillor, I will advocate for staff to meaningfully fulfill the directions given by Council as part of the 2025 Off-Leash Strategy	Strongly agree
2. As Councillor, I will support fencing and enforcement where needed to ensure that Environmentally Significant Areas and community green spaces are protected from illegal off-leash activity.	Strongly agree
3. I believe that education alone can be the solution to the City's off-leash dog challenges.	Mildly disagree
4. I believe that increased by-law patrols and ticketing are needed to deter off-leash activity.	Strongly agree
5. As Councillor, I will support by-law officers having Special Constable status to give officers the authority to require ID and to facilitate the enforcement of all by-laws, including off-leash by-laws.	Mildly agree
6. As future Councillor, what are you prepared to do to improve off-leash areas so that they are more likely to be used in a responsible manner by dog owners?	Propose a combination of bylaw enforcement, education, and prioritization

7. Even where off-leash areas exist, we see illegal off-leash activity in adjacent parkland. Taxpayers fund the installation of new dog parks (at a current estimated budget of \$535,000 per park) and the maintenance of existing off-leash parks (\$9.5 million budgeted over the next 10 years) but the City has not included specific additional funds for off-leash enforcement as directed by Council. As Councillor, how would you address this discrepancy? (City of Toronto, General Manager, Parks and Recreation, 2025)	help fine through ticketing and redirection of municipal licensing staff to assist with this issue
8. Based on the City's estimate of over 600,000 dogs in the City of Toronto, (City of Toronto, General Manager, Parks and Recreation) and the number of licenses issued, only 8-11% of Toronto dogs are licensed (City of Toronto, Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards). The money from licensing supports Toronto's Animal Shelters and could be used to support improving off-leash areas and providing support for by-law enforcement. As City Councillor, how important do you think dog licensing is and what are your ideas to improve licensing rates?	Very important and as Councillor, I will support bylaw enforcement

Adam Smith

Questions

Responses

1. As Councillor, I will advocate for staff to meaningfully fulfill the directions given by Council as part of the 2025 Off-Leash Strategy

Strongly agree
As a resident I have already called out owners of illegally off leash dogs for many years now, it is a serious problem in Ward 19 and across the city.

2. As Councillor, I will support fencing and enforcement where needed to ensure that Environmentally Significant Areas and community green spaces are protected from illegal off-leash activity.

Strongly agree
I hate to say it, but we need to crack down hard, the average dog owner seems to believe the rules are optional and they are exempt.

3. I believe that education alone can be the solution to the City's off-leash dog challenges.

Strongly disagree
I doubt there is a single dog owner that doesn't know what the rules are or when they are breaking them, we need STRICT and ongoing enforcement to get a change in behaviour.

4. I believe that increased by-law patrols and ticketing are needed to deter off-leash activity.

Strongly agree
Asking nicely/educating doesn't work, there must be consequences.

5. As Councillor, I will support by-law officers having Special Constable status to give officers the authority to require ID and to facilitate the enforcement of all by-laws, including off-leash by-laws.

Strongly agree
I don't know why this doesn't exist already, for ALL bylaw enforcement.

6. As future Councillor, what are you prepared to do to improve off-leash areas so that they are more likely to be used in a responsible manner by dog owners?

Unless there is a genuine safety issue, nothing. Dog owners are lucky to have the city spend so much money hiving off an enclosed space just for them and their dogs in our parks.

7. Even where off-leash areas exist, we see illegal off-leash activity in adjacent parkland. Taxpayers fund the installation of new dog parks (at a current estimated budget of \$535,000 per park) and the maintenance of existing off-leash parks (\$9.5 million budgeted over the next 10 years) but the City has not included specific additional funds for off-leash enforcement as directed by Council. As Councillor, how would you address this discrepancy? (City of Toronto, General Manager, Parks and Recreation, 2025)	The problem is so rampant it will make money, not cost it. At any given moment along the beachfront in Ward 19 there are thousands of dollars worth of dog violations happening all year long.
8. Based on the City's estimate of over 600,000 dogs in the City of Toronto, (City of Toronto, General Manager, Parks and Recreation) and the number of licenses issued, only 8-11% of Toronto dogs are licensed (City of Toronto, Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards). The money from licensing supports Toronto's Animal Shelters and could be used to support improving off-leash areas and providing support for by-law enforcement. As City Councillor, how important do you think dog licensing is and what are your ideas to improve licensing rates?	Very important, but I would be licensing owners as well, not just dogs. A dog owner would need to pass a test to prove they know the rules, and if they violate the rules or let the license lapse, their dog can be impounded. And a separate license for professional dog walkers proving they know how to handle and care for multiple dogs in public. Also take a page from places in Europe, where there is a dog DNA database and if feces are left on the ground they can be tested to find the owner of the dog.

Austin Vieira	
Questions	Responses
1. As Councillor, I will advocate for staff to meaningfully fulfill the directions given by Council as part of the 2025 Off-Leash Strategy	Strongly agree As a councillor for Beaches–East York (Ward 19), implementing the 2025 Off-Leash Strategy means shifting from a resident-led model to proactive municipal planning for dog parks. City planners will identify suitable locations and upgrade local infrastructure to ensure efficient and equitable resource distribution
2. As Councillor, I will support fencing and enforcement where needed to ensure that Environmentally Significant Areas and community green spaces are protected from illegal off-leash activity.	Strongly agree As a Councillor, I will support fencing and enforcement where needed to ensure that Environmentally Significant Areas (ESAs) and community green spaces are protected from illegal off-leash activity. Under my Parks, Recreation, & Ravine Strategy, I am fully committed to prioritizing ravine protection, ecosystem restoration, and erosion prevention across Beaches–East York. Protecting our delicate local ecosystems requires clear, physical boundaries and proactive municipal planning rather than relying solely on resident-led complaints. By installing robust fencing around sensitive zones and ensuring strict bylaw enforcement, we can successfully protect our urban wildlife and natural habitats while maintaining safe, shared green spaces for everyone in our community.
3. I believe that education alone can be the solution to the City's off-leash dog challenges.	Mildly agree While community education is important, I do not believe that education alone can be the solution to the City's off-leash dog challenges. To truly protect our community green spaces and Environmentally Significant Areas, we need a proactive strategy that pairs education with physical infrastructure and clear enforcement. This is why my platform advocates for the installation of robust fencing around sensitive natural habitats to create clear, protective boundaries. Education must be backed by a shift toward active municipal planning and consistent bylaw enforcement to ensure our parks remain safe, accessible, and

	ecologically protected for everyone.
4. I believe that increased by-law patrols and ticketing are needed to deter off-leash activity.	Strongly agree I agree completely, and I believe that increased by-law patrols and ticketing are absolutely needed to deter illegal off-leash activity across Beaches–East York. Relying on an educational or reactive complaint-based system is no longer enough to protect our shared parks and delicate natural ecosystems. Under my public safety and parks strategy, I will advocate for proactive, visible by-law enforcement and consistent ticketing to create a meaningful deterrent. By combining increased patrols with robust fencing around Environmentally Significant Areas, we can ensure our community green spaces remain safe, clean, and accessible for all residents
5. As Councillor, I will support by-law officers having Special Constable status to give officers the authority to require ID and to facilitate the enforcement of all by-laws, including off-leash by-laws.	Strongly agree As Councillor, I will support by-law officers having Special Constable status to give officers the authority to require ID and to facilitate the enforcement of all by-laws, including off-leash by-laws. Under my public safety and parks framework, I believe that enforcement tools must match the scope of our community's needs. Giving by-law officers the necessary authority to compel identification means we can move away from toothless warnings and toward meaningful accountability. This step is essential for creating a real deterrent against illegal activities, ensuring our by-laws are respected, and protecting our shared community spaces, ravines, and public infrastructure effectively.
6. As future Councillor, what are you prepared to do to improve off-leash areas so that they are more likely to be used in a responsible manner by dog owners?	As Councillor, I am prepared to shift Toronto away from its current reactive, resident-led model toward a proactive, municipally-led approach to our Off-Leash Areas (OLAs). To ensure these spaces are used responsibly, I will advocate for immediate infrastructure upgrades, including high-quality double-gated fencing, proper lighting, and durable, weather-resistant surfacing that keeps parks clean and usable year-round. My plan under the 2025 Off-Leash Strategy is to ensure city planners actively identify and design well-resourced OLAs that naturally encourage responsible use while keeping dogs away from sensitive ecosystems. By building better, clearly designated facilities and pairing them with consistent enforcement, we can create safe spaces for dogs while protecting our broader community green spaces.

7. Even where off-leash areas exist, we see illegal off-leash activity in adjacent parkland. Taxpayers fund the installation of new dog parks (at a current estimated budget of \$535,000 per park) and the maintenance of existing off-leash parks (\$9.5 million budgeted over the next 10 years) but the City has not included specific additional funds for off-leash enforcement as directed by Council. As Councillor, how would you address this discrepancy? (City of Toronto, General Manager, Parks and Recreation, 2025)	Addressing the fiscal discrepancy between capital investments in dog parks and the lack of operational enforcement requires rebalancing parks and safety budgets to protect major infrastructure. Under a proposed Public Safety and Ravine Strategy, a fixed percentage of new capital spending for off-leash areas would be tied directly to a dedicated enforcement fund prioritizing proactive by-law patrols.
8. Based on the City's estimate of over 600,000 dogs in the City of Toronto, (City of Toronto, General Manager, Parks and Recreation) and the number of licenses issued, only 8-11% of Toronto dogs are licensed (City of Toronto, Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards). The money from licensing supports Toronto's Animal Shelters and could be used to support improving off-leash areas and providing support for by-law enforcement. As City Councillor, how important do you think dog licensing is and what are your ideas to improve licensing rates?	Dog licensing is critically important because it directly impacts the funding available for our animal shelters, off-leash park maintenance, and the proactive by-law enforcement our green spaces desperately need. To dramatically improve Toronto's current low licensing rates, I propose integrating pet registration directly into existing online city portals, partnering with local veterinary clinics and pet stores for point-of-sale licensing, and visibly reinvesting a percentage of these fees back into local park infrastructure so owners see the immediate community benefit.

Jeff Wahl	
Questions	Responses
1. As Councillor, I will advocate for staff to meaningfully fulfill the directions given by Council as part of the 2025 Off-Leash Strategy	Mildly agree
2. As Councillor, I will support fencing and enforcement where needed to ensure that Environmentally Significant Areas and community green spaces are protected from illegal off-leash activity.	Mildly agree
3. I believe that education alone can be the solution to the City's off-leash dog challenges.	Mildly disagree Off leash parks, already sparse, tend to be located closer to more affluent areas of the ward. There should be an expansion of these areas to create greater access. I would also look at ensuring new density builds include off leash park areas of there isn't already one close by.
4. I believe that increased by-law patrols and ticketing are needed to deter off-leash activity.	Mildly agree As by law officers have no power of arrest (nor should they), I'd be concerned about their safety when attempting to levy a fine. I'm also concerned that would disproportionately target low income dog owners. Although I support in principle, execution is problematic
5. As Councillor, I will support by-law officers having Special Constable status to give officers the authority to require ID and to facilitate the enforcement of all by-laws, including off-leash by-laws.	Mildly disagree As stated above, I can see this being inadvertently targeted towards low income dog owners. I'd prefer to look at dog licenses and chipping.
6. As future Councillor, what are you prepared to do to improve off-leash areas so that they are	More obvious and clear signage. Better waste collection, including a bag dispenser.

more likely to be used in a responsible manner by dog owners?	
7. Even where off-leash areas exist, we see illegal off-leash activity in adjacent parkland. Taxpayers fund the installation of new dog parks (at a current estimated budget of \$535,000 per park) and the maintenance of existing off-leash parks (\$9.5 million budgeted over the next 10 years) but the City has not included specific additional funds for off-leash enforcement as directed by Council. As Councillor, how would you address this discrepancy? (City of Toronto, General Manager, Parks and Recreation, 2025)	As stated earlier, dog owner license/chipping greatly reduces risk of physical confrontations and allows electronic ticketing/fines. Similar to parking infractions.
8. Based on the City's estimate of over 600,000 dogs in the City of Toronto, (City of Toronto, General Manager, Parks and Recreation) and the number of licenses issued, only 8-11% of Toronto dogs are licensed (City of Toronto, Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards). The money from licensing supports Toronto's Animal Shelters and could be used to support improving off-leash areas and providing support for by-law enforcement. As City Councillor, how important do you think dog licensing is and what are your ideas to improve licensing rates?	Make it mandatory for dog ownership. Also make it accessible for all dog owners (cost, platform variance etc). To truly make this effective, dog sellers/breeders would need to all be licensed as well which would require multi level government participation which I would petition for.

Jennie Worden	
Questions	Responses
1. As Councillor, I will advocate for staff to meaningfully fulfill the directions given by Council as part of the 2025 Off-Leash Strategy	Strongly agree
2. As Councillor, I will support fencing and enforcement where needed to ensure that Environmentally Significant Areas and community green spaces are protected from illegal off-leash activity.	Strongly agree
3. I believe that education alone can be the solution to the City's off-leash dog challenges.	Mildly disagree Behaviour change should start with education; however, where education is not enough to inspire behaviour change, we need to move to appropriate enforcement.
4. I believe that increased by-law patrols and ticketing are needed to deter off-leash activity.	Mildly agree
5. As Councillor, I will support by-law officers having Special Constable status to give officers the authority to require ID and to facilitate the enforcement of all by-laws, including off-leash by-laws.	Strongly agree
6. As future Councillor, what are you prepared to do to improve off-leash areas so that they are more likely to be used in a responsible manner by dog owners?	Toronto needs to plan for dogs as part of urban life, while also protecting everyone's ability to enjoy public space. This means ensuring that dog off-leash areas (DOLAs) are accessible to urban dog-owners, and appropriate to the needs of urban dogs. In Ward 19, park space is limited, with competing user groups, making it a challenge to find new spaces to build off-leash areas; however, the uneven distribution of off-leash areas means that dog-owners may choose to allow their dogs off-leash in inappropriate spaces.

	We have a real gap in DOLA distribution, with two off-leash areas in the Beaches, and one in East York, while our population is concentrated more densely around Main Square and Taylor-Massey. In order to promote responsible DOLA use, I'd like to identify at least one space for a DOLA in the underserved Taylor-Massey Community and one in the Woodbine-Coxwell corridor.
7. Even where off-leash areas exist, we see illegal off-leash activity in adjacent parkland. Taxpayers fund the installation of new dog parks (at a current estimated budget of \$535,000 per park) and the maintenance of existing off-leash parks (\$9.5 million budgeted over the next 10 years) but the City has not included specific additional funds for off-leash enforcement as directed by Council. As Councillor, how would you address this discrepancy? (City of Toronto, General Manager, Parks and Recreation, 2025)	If enforcement is a priority, then it must be funded. While Toronto added three new Animal Control Officers in 2024, it's clear that more funding for leash-enforcement is needed. I would be prepared to advocate for at least one more Animal Control Officer focussed on off-leash enforcement.
8. Based on the City's estimate of over 600,000 dogs in the City of Toronto, (City of Toronto, General Manager, Parks and Recreation) and the number of licenses issued, only 8-11% of Toronto dogs are licensed (City of Toronto, Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards). The money from licensing supports Toronto's Animal Shelters and could be used to support improving off-leash areas and providing support for by-law enforcement. As City Councillor, how important do you think dog licensing is and what are your ideas to improve licensing rates?	We need to understand why so few dogs in Toronto are licensed in the first place. Rather than lecturing and hectoring people to comply, I'd start by making it easier, more enticing, and more useful. The City could work with veterinary offices to make annual license updates part of the annual check-up routine (with owners' consent), and provide clear information to owners on the benefits of pet licensing. A targeted education campaign using social media as well as city advertising would also be a relatively low-cost way to remind pet owners of their obligations.

