

Ward 13 - Toronto Centre

Responding Candidates:

[Norman MacLeod](#)

[Chris Moise](#)

[Nicki Ward](#)

Chris Moise	
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.	Strongly 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.	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?	As a dog dad myself, I understand how central off-leash areas are to daily life in our dense, vertical neighbourhoods, this is something I care about personally. In Toronto Centre, many of our most heavily used off-leash areas are aging and overdue for a refresh. I am committed to modernizing these spaces with better materials, shade, seating, lighting, water stations, and agility features that make them genuinely enjoyable and easier to use responsibly.

	That work is already underway. Upgrades are in progress at the Allan Gardens and Barbara Hall Park off-leash areas, a brand new off-leash area is under construction in the Corktown and Canary District, and the Regent Park off-leash area is queued for upgrades as well. When our parks are well designed and well maintained, dog owners are more likely to use them as intended and look out for one another while doing so. I will continue to prioritize these investments so that every corner of the ward has a space where dogs and their people can thrive.
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)	This is a real frustration, and I want to be honest with residents about both my commitment and the structural realities of how the City works. As a Councillor, I can advocate strongly, and I will. But there are two important constraints worth naming. First, the General Manager of Municipal Licensing and Standards reports directly to the City Manager and the Mayor, not to Council. As that position will need to be filled in the coming term, I hope whoever is hired by the Mayor and City Manager brings a genuine commitment to bylaw enforcement and to building a stronger culture of accountability within the division. Second, the budget is the Mayor's budget. Dedicating specific funds to off-leash enforcement requires the Mayor's support and a majority of Council. I will push for that funding to be included, and I will work to build the coalition needed to get it over the line. What I can commit is that I will keep making the case. We are asking residents and taxpayers to invest in these spaces, and they deserve to see those spaces respected and enforced.

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 matters, and an 8 to 11% compliance rate tells me we have a real opportunity to do better for our animals and our communities. The revenue from licensing directly supports Animal Services and could go further in funding off-leash area improvements and bylaw enforcement. That is money we are leaving on the table every year. The honest truth is that the licensing process is too cumbersome, and that drives non-compliance more than indifference does. I have already begun working with Municipal Licensing and Standards staff to explore ways to simplify renewals. Part of that is a broader city-wide fix I have been pushing for: a single resident portal where you can submit 31 requests, pay property taxes, register for recreation programs, and license your pets, all in one place. Making it easier to do the right thing is the fastest way to get more people doing it. I have also been exploring a partnership model with veterinarians and pet stores so that licensing can be processed right at the point of a routine visit. That kind of convenience removes the friction entirely and meets residents where they already are. Licensing should be simple, accessible, and worth it. I am committed to getting us there.
--	---

Nicki Ward

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 responsible dog owner, I know that we are a benefit to the community. But, I'm exasperated by owners who make the rest of us look bad. The "educate" first isn't working because responsible dog owners are already educated.

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
"Good fences make good neighbours" - They also make for great off leash areas.

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

Strongly disagree
Ludicrous for two reasons - A) Irresponsible dog owners are resistant to education. B) As smart as my dog was, I never taught him to read. Signs don't work in either case.

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

Strongly agree
Without discipline, irresponsible dog owners will not modify their behaviours. As a society, we know that telling such people with an authoritative "NO... BAD HUMAN!" doesn't work. Thus we need to use ticketing.

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
Of course! As an aside, I think the City should make repeat offenders attend dog/human training sessions. We do this with repeat traffic offenders, and it might actually help.

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?

Establish dog training sessions in all 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)	In Ward 1 Toronto Centre, we need to invest much more in parks... period. Urban parks in areas like ours need dog space as infrastructure. To be clear...we have 10's of thousands of new people (and their dogs) and not improvement in infrastructure for them. To be clearer: This is not okay.
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?	Licensing doesn't generate meaningful net revenue - Most of the licensing revenue is eaten up by City admin. In my opinion while licensing is important (to ensure vaccination, etc.) it is not an adequate way to fund infrastructure. Best estimate is about 45,000 dogs times an average fee of \$40 is only a net revenue of \$1.8million. After services rendered and admin costs... not enough. Parks in Toronto Center / Ward 1 are social infrastructure and need serious budgets far in excess of this. In Toronto Centre I am committed to using developer offsets AND budget alignment to invest in this vital infrastructure.

Norman MacLeod

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 Decided
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.	Neither agree nor disagree Subject to Ward 13 needs
3. I believe that education alone can be the solution to the City's off-leash dog challenges.	Neither agree nor disagree People in general have common knowledge
4. I believe that increased by-law patrols and ticketing are needed to deter off-leash activity.	Mildly disagree Some direction when required regarding Ward 13
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 disagree Enough enforcement in Ward 13. We need facility and progress for people.
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?	Ward 13 consulting

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)	Because for the most part enforcing causes life problem to a greater degree.
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?	If available on the cheap, or offered by Association, maybe