

Ward 3 - Etobicoke-Lakeshore

Responding Candidates:

[Michaela Andrei](#)

[Anthony Internicola](#)

Mihaela Andrei

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
Council passed this unanimously and then didn't get the reporting it ordered. That's not a dog issue, it's an accountability issue. Directions with deadlines should come back with data attached; patrols, charges, warnings or Council can't tell whether the strategy is working. I would expect the Q2026 report to be delivered and I would press for it if it isn't.

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
Environmentally significant shoreline habitat should be protected, and where signage has failed, physical separation is the necessary remedy. I would want it applied where there's demonstrated harm rather than as a blanket approach to all parkland. Protection works better when people also have somewhere legitimate to go, so those decisions should be considered together.

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

Mildly disagree
A decade of education-first hasn't produced compliance, so no, I do not believe education alone is the answer. In the neighbourhoods with yards and small local parks, the complaint is dogs off-leash where kids play, and that's an enforcement and presence issue. Along the waterfront it's capacity, residents have few legitimate places to go. One citywide approach applied evenly to both won't fix either. Ward needs to be read neighbourhood by neighbourhood, enforcement where the problem is behaviour, provision where it's capacity.

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

Strongly agree
Yes. Unenforced rules are not rules, they are suggestions, and a decade of that is what produced the current situation. Visible, consistent presence changes behaviour faster than signage does and it has to be consistent. Blitzes generate resentment without changing habits.

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.	Neither agree nor disagree The proposal needs to be considered before committing. Requiring identification is a real authority with real costs, training, oversight, complaint process, liability and Special Constable status covers enforcement of every by-law, not just off-leash. I'm not opposed in principle. An officer who can't identify the person in front of them can't enforce anything, and that's a genuine gap. But this is a citywide policing question with other factors to consider. If it comes to Council I would want the police board's position, the cost, and the accountability framework.
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?	Three things. First, design that makes responsible use the easy option — water, waste stations that are actually serviced, separation for various sizes of dogs, surfaces that don't turn to mud. Most bad behaviour at shared amenities comes from facilities that don't work, not from people who don't care. Second, clarity about who is accountable for a space. I've spent years governing shared amenities at a 1,285-unit building, and the pattern is consistent: unowned space degrades, and space with someone responsible for it does not. A stakeholder group or a recognized user association per site gives the City someone to call and gives users a stake in keeping it right. Third, maintenance that keeps pace. A park that is visibly cared for gets treated better than one that isn't. Ten years of budgeted maintenance only matters if the work is actually done on schedule.
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)	These are two different budgets. Building a park is capital spending; enforcement is staff, and staff comes out of the operating budget through a separate process. Council asked for enforcement resources and the budget came back without them. I would raise that at the budget committee, where the decision is actually made, and I would bring the enforcement numbers Council asked for because a request for staff with no evidence behind it does not survive a budget round.

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 matters and for good reason, it's how a lost dog gets home, and how the City has any idea of the scale it's planning for. On revenue, at roughly a 10% compliance rate, licensing isn't currently a meaningful funding source. On improving the rate, I would make it automatic at the points where people already interact with the system such as veterinary clinics, shelters, rescues, adoption rather than expecting a separate voluntary transaction. Make renewal painless and multi-year and understand why compliance is low before spending on a campaign, because a 90% non-compliance rate usually means the offering needs revising.
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Anthony Internicola

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 I support meaningful implementation of the 2025 Dogs Off-Leash Strategy. Toronto should provide safe, properly designed and maintained off-leash areas for responsible dog owners while ensuring that leash rules outside those designated areas are respected and enforced.
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 Environmentally Significant Areas and sensitive natural spaces deserve protection. I support appropriate fencing and enforcement where evidence shows they are needed, while ensuring that responsible dog owners continue to have access to properly located and maintained designated off-leash areas.
3. I believe that education alone can be the solution to the City's off-leash dog challenges.	Strongly disagree Education is important, especially for first-time or accidental violations, but education alone is not enough when people repeatedly ignore the rules. Toronto needs a balanced approach of education, accessible off-leash spaces and fair, consistent enforcement.
4. I believe that increased by-law patrols and ticketing are needed to deter off-leash activity.	Strongly agree I support targeted by-law patrols in areas experiencing persistent problems, particularly where there are safety concerns, conflicts with other park users or risks to wildlife. Enforcement should be fair and consistent, with stronger action for repeat or deliberate violations.
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 I support giving enforcement officers the practical tools needed to enforce City by-laws, including addressing situations where individuals refuse to identify themselves. I am open to Special Constable status where legally appropriate, but I would want the City to establish proper training, accountability, clearly defined powers and safeguards before expanding enforcement authority.

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?	I support safe, clean and properly maintained off-leash areas that responsible dog owners will actually want to use. That means appropriate fencing, secure entrances, waste bins, clear signage, proper drainage and surfaces, and regular maintenance. I would also consult local residents and dog owners about where improvements are most needed. If we expect people to follow the rules outside designated areas, the City also has a responsibility to provide practical and well-designed spaces where dogs can legally exercise off-leash.
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)	I believe the City needs both appropriate off-leash facilities and effective enforcement. It does not make sense to invest significant taxpayer dollars in designated off-leash areas while allowing repeated illegal off-leash activity immediately outside them to go unchecked. I would advocate for adequate, targeted enforcement resources, particularly in parks with recurring complaints, safety concerns or impacts on wildlife. At the same time, I would review spending to make sure taxpayers are receiving value for money. My approach is simple: provide reasonable places for responsible dog owners to use, clearly communicate the rules, and consistently enforce those rules when they are ignored.
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 important because it helps identify lost pets and supports the services Toronto provides for animals. If compliance is as low as the available estimates suggest, however, the City needs to understand why so many owners are not participating. I would make licensing simple, affordable and easy to renew, improve public awareness, work with veterinarians, shelters and community organizations to promote registration, and explore convenient reminders and multi-year options where practical. I would also support reasonable enforcement for continued non-compliance. My goal would not be to treat responsible dog owners as a source of revenue. It would be to dramatically improve compliance while ensuring licensing revenue is transparently reinvested into animal services, responsible pet ownership and appropriate dog facilities.