



A Howlin' G ood Time OFF-LEASH NEWS

FEBRUARY 2015

Another Clean-up March TBA

Join us to address winter accumulation of dog poop at River Park. We'll wait for a Chinook to melt away snow and then with short notice, we'll send out a call for helpers using email and Twitter.

Park User Reminder

Got a barker? Help us reduce noise levels in the park for residents and other park users. No need for more opposition to dogs in the park. Please be respectful... It's the right thing to do!



UNSUBSCRIBE OPTION

If for some reason you no longer wish to receive communication, just let me know.

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📘 [friends of river park](https://www.facebook.com/friends.of.river.park)

Revised River Park Usage

Tell-tale footprints in week-old snow present an interesting comparison between the north and south main entrances of River Park.



Good to see dogs and owners being respectful of the new on-leash requirements imposed last October in the north end. Too bad... Many of us felt the restrictions could have been delayed until more park development started.



New Year's Day Park Fun

After a bit of a sleep in on January 1 many dog owners made their way to River Park to pawty with their dog on New Year's Day.

Just over 100 people enjoyed some cookies and spiced tea while their dogs were treated to biscuits, liver bits and chicken chunks, compliments of The Friends of River Park Leadership Team.

Best wishes to everyone for a pawsome New Year!



Weather Considerations

Winter is here! Remember weather fluctuations and extreme temperatures can put our pets at risk for illness, injury and exposure to the elements.

To keep your pet safe this winter below are some good reminders:

- Limit outdoor exposure accordingly
- Carefully monitor outdoor playtime during extreme weather to avoid frostbite or hypothermia
- Use coats and boots for pets that do not have thick coats
- Check paws for ice build-up or bleeding
- Keep furry paws trimmed to limit snowball build-up
- During icy conditions, limit running and trim nails to avoid breakage
- Wipe paws and stomach to reduce build up from chemicals such as ice melt
- Use pet safe ice melt products

Thanks to **Kathleen H** for sharing these seasonal reminders with fellow dog people.

Canine Comedy Corner

Thanks to **Nadina S** from The Friends of River Park Leadership Team and **Pat H** who found a little dog humour to share with our pack members!

Without a doubt our dogs know how to have fun in so many of their own ways.



Are You Aware of Design & Development Plans for the Park?

Although the process began in 2007 and plans passed in 2011, the majority of park users have little or no idea about any of the plans for River Park, Sandy Beach and the Britannia Escarpment.



According to The City's website, here's a chronological list of what transpired:

- In 2007 The City received concerns about over-use/deterioration; maintenance/long-term planning was requested to manage/reduce user conflicts
- In 2008 Parks hired O2 Planning + Design to develop a management and development plan
- A planning process was launched in Fall 2008 until Spring 2011
- 2009 public engagement consisted of two stakeholder workshops (Jan 29 & July 16), an online survey (July/Aug) and a public open house (Sept 29)
- 2011 public engagement consisted of two info sessions (Jan 19 & 27), one open space workshop (Feb 12), a world cafe workshop (March 19), two rounds of moderated online dialogue (March 1-17 and April 4-15), online public review (May 10-20) and a public open house (May 14)

The City stated in an Calgary Herald article that \$8.3 million had to be found in order to proceed with design, management and development.

When the 2013 flood occurred, it was widely thought all development would be delayed. However in 2014, the Sandy Beach bridge reconstruction was completed and fences were erected in Sandy Beach and River Park.

Residents and people who use Sandy Beach and the Britannia side were so unhappy with the reduction of space, the fences and small doggie area, they started petitions and protested during the re-opening of the Sandy Beach bridge in Fall 2014.

Meanwhile, River Park users quietly accepted the fence erected at the north end even though it's well known around the park that no one likes the fence. Most people have no idea there are plans to erect two more fences just like it and they will also stretch from east to west. Approximate locations appear to be just north of the slough (near the parking lot) and the other looks like it will be close to the fountain. Their logic is to use the fences to close areas of the park and allow the terrain to rejuvenate.

Many longtime users just prefer more aerating, watering and mowing as is done in the south end of the park rather than corralling users into smaller areas. Compacting use will certainly be hard on the terrain. Again, many longtimers know the irrigation system in the north end of the park hasn't been used in decades. Perhaps money can be spent to augment the irrigation system and maintenance budget rather than erect fences. Aerial maps of River Park show a distinct difference in the north and south ends. It's good to consider that just a little more TLC can be the solution. Maybe it's just a matter of convincing decision-makers.

More development will likely occur in Spring/Summer this year. If you don't want to see proposed plans proceed, you must become informed and get involved. Make your voice heard by contacting your alderman or list your concern through 3-1-1.

BarkBox Delivers Excitement and Surprise

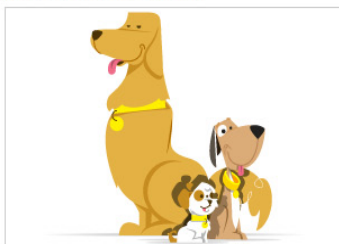
Although I'm not one to typically promote a product or service, **Chong & Kathleen** recently shared some interesting info about a company called **Barkbox**. It's an inexpensive service that provides a monthly surprise gift for your dog. Ask any dog if they'd enjoy getting a surprise in the mail and you know the answer.

Tell BarkBox a bit about your pooch, choose a plan for approximately \$15 or \$20 per month and they'll send a package with a couple of toys and treats. Each month your dog will receive something different and BarkBox tailors contents to events such as Valentine's Day, Halloween and Christmas.

How it Works

1. Choose dog size.

Tell us how big your dog's bark is. We've got goodies for every dog size.



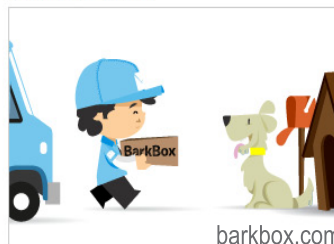
2. Choose plan.

1, 3, 6, or 12 month plans available. Cancel anytime. Free shipping.



3. Get BarkBox.

BarkBoxes are shipped on the 15th of each month. Get excited!



Paws for Thought

You don't have to ask dog people about the benefits and advantages of having a furry companion and family member but here's some interesting reading to back it up. We owe them credit and much gratitude.

The [Mayo Clinic](#) relates the great [benefits of pet therapy](#)

Another [recent article](#) from the [Washington Post](#) about pets improving your health



Caring for Your Pet In Sickness and Health

This section features some great online info to help keep all of our furry family members healthy and happy.

An article and video with some helpful info about [dog obesity](#) from [PetMD](#)



From Pet Education veterinarians **Race Foster** and **Marty Smith** talk about [behaviour changes in senior dogs](#)



Teaching eye contact with your dog from [veterinarypartner.com](#)

