

## UNA Dog Park Grand Opening

December 11, 2025

### Opening Remarks

Eagle Glassheim, Chair, UNA Board of Directors

Watch the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hblkZZbTQU>

I'll definitely keep this short because I know there are a lot of eager dogs here, and maybe some eager humans too.

I'm Eagle Glassheim. I'm the Chair of the UNA, and I was also on the UNA Board in an earlier term when we initiated the dog park and did a lot of work on it.

Before we crack open the ceremonial dog biscuits — actually, we've already cracked open the ceremonial dog biscuits — before we get going though, I'd like to acknowledge that the university neighbourhoods and this new park are located within the traditional ancestral territories of the Musqueam people. I realize that acknowledgement can mean many things but, for the UNA, it means at the very least a commitment to reconciliation and partnership undertaken together with UBC, as well as a shared commitment to responsible stewardship of the land out here on the peninsula.

I want to thank the many people who helped make this park a reality, and this list is long, but it'll go quickly, I hope, but it's important to name some names.

UNA staff put in an enormous amount of time on this. Paul Thorkelsson; Wegland Sit, Operations Manager; Gal Kaufman; Isabel Todorova, who was the Sustainability Specialist when this was conceived; and Glenda Ollero. All of them oversaw the conceptualization, public consultation, design, construction, and then this festive opening of the park.

I want to mention the landscape architect, Richard Finley, who did the detailed design of the park. Electoral Area A Representative Jen McCutcheon worked with the UNA to get the Metro Vancouver Community Works Fund for the park, and without that we wouldn't have been able to do this. UBC's Director of Community Development, Carole Jolly, worked closely with the UNA, and also Campus and Community Planning to identify the best site for the park. Paul Young and colleagues from UBC Properties Trust played an important role in that collaboration.

Last, but definitely not least, Richard Watson, and I know I'm going to embarrass him, but he's the past Chair of the UNA, and it was his vision and persistence that were essential ingredients in the alchemy required to get this thing built. For that, I want to present Richard with this ceremonial dog bone, and I hope he'll share it with his dog. I should have put a sign on that that said, "Humans, do not eat this." I'll just also note that no animals were harmed in the production of that bone.

To put this in a broader perspective, I'd say dog parks are a very special treat for dogs, there's no question about that. They can romp, they can sniff, they can roughhouse. They can do their business free of leashes in a space where they don't need to worry so much about hurting human feelings — that is, peeing on the wrong bush, you might say. Also, though, dog parks build human community, and these are places where people meet, where they talk, and they share appreciation — and maybe grumbles too — about their neighbourhoods and their lives.

There are also a lot of people, especially kids and seniors, who enjoy watching dogs but can't keep dogs on their own, and so the dog park is, in many ways, something that belongs to far more than just the dogs and the dog owners. It's an important part of building community. I'd say that dog parks, like playgrounds, are a public good, and I'm really grateful to all who helped build the park.

I'm gratified and super excited to see all of you and your dogs out here on a pretty chilly, still rather wet day. This is just a great start for this great addition to our community.

With that, I would say we should cut the ribbon, break the bone, so to speak, and then let the dogs do their thing!