




Yovani Baez-Rose
Assistant City Manager/DPD Director

Camilo Espitia
Deputy Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Thomas A. Golden, Jr., City Manager 

FROM: Yovani Baez-Rose, Assistant City Manager/DPD Director

CC: Jess Wilson, Design Planner
Shannon Cohan, Superintendent of Parks

SUBJECT: MOTION RESPONSE: 5/9/23 - Councilors Leahy/Gitschier - Request City Manager Have Proper Department Explore The Feasibility Of Placing Micro Dog Parks In Around Neighborhood District Parks

The Department of Planning and Development has been in communication with the Parks Department about the possibility of creating micro dog parks throughout the city. DPD staff also researched a variety of dog parks and found a model that is used in rest areas along highways that seemed to best align with the proposed concept. Per city ordinance, dogs are not allowed off leash in any city park, besides the existing dog park.

DPD is working on an application for a foundation grant that would cover the costs associated with a larger, off-leash dog park that will include amenities such as play equipment, seating areas and separated small and large dog areas. The new dog park will be located at South Common.

Small, or micro dog parks are beneficial for city residents as it would create a dedicated space where they could bring their dogs on walks and would provide a space where they might use the restroom and dispose of any waste on site. The difficulty with creating these spaces is the cost of installation, maintenance, and the reliance on city residents to maintain the spaces as safe and usable areas.

Rest stop dog parks can be as small as 50 square feet, costs associated for the installation of one of these parks would consist of fencing, grading, ground cover, and waste disposal facilities, such as bag dispensers and trash cans. Public works staff, most likely from the Parks Division, would be charged with ongoing maintenance. DPD staff could work collaboratively with Parks to determine locations within some parks that may absorb this type of facility without negatively impacting the larger park.

DPD has concerns about how these spaces would be managed and what the safest way to utilize the space would be. With small or micro dog parks, there is no opportunity to separate small and large dogs like there would be in a larger dog park. Integrating non familiar dogs into a small space could be dangerous for the pets and their owners. DPD would recommend if these areas are created, that dogs not be allowed off leash at any time. A public education campaign would likely also be needed to ensure park users were only bringing dogs with all necessary vaccinations, are appropriately picking up waste, and that members of the public without dogs should not use these areas as a way to interact with dogs they are unfamiliar with. Before committing to multiple locations DPD would suggest moving forward with a single location as a pilot program if it is the will of the Council to do so.