CITY OF SPOKANE DOG PARK GUIDELINES

City of Spokane Parks and Recreation

Draft September 2022

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The City of Spokane Dog Park Guidelines document is designed to provide information on level of service demand, location siting, design and maintenance to be used as a reference when the City is selcting and designing future dog parks. Throughout the process of developing these guidelines, research on award-winning dog parks and dog parks in municipalities has been compiled and analyzed so that a thoughful design process can be established.

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BACKGROUND

The demand for dog parks and designated off-leash areas has grown tremendously in the past couple decades since their introduction to the US in 1979. As population density increases, we see a focus in providing more multi-family housing and houses on smaller residential lots. A growing percent of residents need places to bring their dogs outdoors.

According to the 2013 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), the desire for dog parks ranks 21st in importance compared to other recreational activities. A recorded 11.5% of Washington residents use established dog parks, and nearly 52% of residents report walking with a dog, whether on-leash or off-leash. These numbers are projected to increase. The Trust for Public Land has reported that between 2009 and 2019, the number of dog parks have increased by 74% in the nation's 100 largest cities.

People love dogs. You can never go wrong adding a dog to the story.

~ Jim Butcher

The American Veterinary Medical Association states that there are 1.6 dogs per household on average in the United States with 38.4% of American households owning a dog. Dog ownership increased by nearly 11% during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Based on the 2020 Census, the City of Spokane's 230,328 residents live in 93,075 households which means that in 2020 there were just under 150,000 dogs in the City. This estimation is conservative, as recent survey results by the City show that between 45-55% of household own at least one dog.

As part of the preparation for the 2022 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the City of Spokane conducted a survey on current park use and future park desires. About two-thirds of residents preferred that Parks focus first on adding dog parks and off-leash areas in the next few years. Half of the participants felt that dog parks in natural areas were less desired, but respondents in District 1 favored the idea more. In fact, District 1 had a much higher reported desire for adding dog parks and off-leash areas (76%) compared to District 2 (62%) and District 3 (56%).

The City of Spokane currently has two designated off-leash area dog parks: High Bridge Dog Park and the Downtown Dog Park at Riverside Avenue. A third dog park is currently in the planning phase for Riverfront Park. The "Unofficial South Hill Dog Park", which is not currently part of the City's Dog Park system, will be relocated and added to the inventory. Through these guidelines, other potential areas will be examined for future dog park expansion.

SPOKANE DOG STATS
BY THE NUMBERS:

Public Survey Results:

1,158 participants
87% City of Spokane residents
90% dog owners

Current City Dog Parks **2**

3 Other Substantial Public Dog Parks in the County

53% of survey respondents are willing to walk 15 minutes to a dog park

81% will walk 10 minutes

Preferred Design Look:

Natural & Expansive

Representative of the native Spokane landscape

56% of people prefer larger sized drivable facilities

Other high-ranking features:

Large Size & Availability of Site Utilities

Substantial Existing Tree Canopy

Top Desired Dog Park Feature

150,000

Estimated Dog Population

79% would prefer dog park sizes to be reduced or located on developed land if it meant protecting "natural" lands

93% agree it is important to protect water quality and riparian habitat

GLOSSARY

Citywide Dog Park Committee (CDPC) - Also referred to as the Dog Park Advisory Committee or PAC, this diverse team of volunteer members has been specially curated to help guide the selection and design of future dog parks. Each member was selected based on their Park District region, expertise in a certain field, or experience in dog parks.

Dog Park - A fenced off-leash area specifically designed and designated for use by dogs and their human companions.

Level of Service (LOS) - The minimum capacity and quality of public facilities or services that are needed to serve the community at a desired and measurable standard.

Off-Leash Area (OLA) - An area, either fenced in or open, that is available for dogs to roam leash free. Areas may include special restrictions, such as limited hours or off-season use only.

Pathway - a designated, paved path of travel for pedestrians

Pocket Park - A very small outdoor public space under 1 acre in size, typically located in urban or densely populated neighborhoods.

Trail - An organic, socially developed walkway within the landscape for pedestrians and wildlife.

Unofficial South Hill Dog Park (SHDP) - A roughly 5.25 acre dog park located on 63rd Avenue in Spokane, which is slated to be removed. A partnership with Spokane Public Schools and the City of Spokane has agreed to find a new official location for the park in District 2.

PART 1

SITE SELECTION GUIDELINES

LEVEL OF SERVICE

There is no standard method of determining a minimum number of facilities needed when it comes to locating dog parks. Most municipalities either focus on providing a pre-determined number of facilities to each of their individual districts or rely on placing dog parks based solely on the measured distance between facilities.

While both concepts can be useful for determining placement of new facilities, they do not provide a measurable standard of how we can determine the demand of designated off-leash space. As a response, the City of Spokane's desired level of service is determined by a combination of two metrics: quantity of facilities and area of designated dog space.

- Current City LoS =1 park per ~115,000 people
- National Average =1 per 46,000 people
- Avg. for Pop 100k-250k = 1 per 76,000 people
- Pacific Northwest Avg. = 1 per 26,600 people

With Spokane's current population of approximately 230,000 residents, the two existing facilities greatly underserve the City. Based on the statistics above, Spokane Parks and Recreation should expect to pursue a level of service of between 1 facility per 26,000 – 76,000. This will require a total of between 3 and 9 facilities, or a net increase of 1 to 7 facilities, depending on distribution, functionality, dog park type, location, and citizen preferences for other desired amenities.

Further research was taken into comparing several similar sized cities based on population, land area, and population density. Table A.1 looks at the number of facilities provided by each city, and the estimated dogs they serve per park. Based on these calculations, these cities provide off-leash space for up to 7 times the number of dogs that Spokane currently does. To be on par with these rankings, Spokane would need to provide a minimum of 6 dog parks (as shown in Table A.2). This equals approximately **1 facility per 38,000 people**, or **1 facility per 25,000 dogs**.

Rank	City	No. Dog Parks	Est. Dogs per Park
1	Boise, ID	16	9,536
2	Baton Rouge, LA	6	22,329
3	***Spokane, WA***	***6***	***24,820***
4	Tacoma, WA	5	26,780
5	Santa Clarita, CA	4	27,990
6	Richmond, VA	5	28,761
7	Grand Rapids, MI	3	40,225

Table A.2 - Desired Density-based Level of Service

City	Population	Land Area (sq. mi)	Pop. Density (#/sq. mi)	Households	Est. Dog Population	No. Dog Parks	Est. Dogs per Park
Boise, ID	235,684	84.0	2,806	95,359	152,574	16	9,536
Santa Clarita, CA	228,673	70.8	3,230	69,975	111,960	4	27,990
Baton Rouge, LA	227,470	86.3	2,636	83,733	133,973	6	22,329
Richmond, VA	226,610	59.9	3,783	89,878	143,805	5	28,761
Tacoma, WA	222,975	49.8	4,481	83,688	133,901	5	26,780
Grand Rapids, MI	203,644	44.8	4,550	75,422	120,675	3	40,225
Spokane, WA	***228,989***	***68.8***	***3,328***	***93,075***	***148,920***	***2***	***74,460***

Table A.1 - Current Level of Service Comparison (Number of Facilities)

Rank	City	No. Dog Parks	Dog Park Area (acre)	Dog Park Size Range (acre)	Calc. LOS provided (ac. per 10,000 residents)
1	Boise, ID	16	20.40 + 239 OLA	1 - 10 (4 - 153 OLA)	0.86 (10.99 Incl. OLA)
2	Tacoma, WA	5	14.50	1 - 7	0.65
3	Baton Rouge, LA	6	12.65	0.75 - 6	0.56
4	***Spokane, WA***	***2***	***9.36***	***Downtown: 0.07 High Bridge: 9.29***	***0.41***
5	Grand Rapids, MI	3	3.00	1	0.15
6	Santa Clarita, CA	4	2.75	Up to 1.3	0.12
7	Richmond, VA	5	2.38	Up to 1.2	0.11

Table A.3 - Current Level of Service Comparison (Acreage)

Although a good starting place, these calculations do not consider the variations in size of off-leash areas. The same cities as before were examined based on total acreage of dog park space provided. As seen in Table A.3, the results vary widely. The cities with higher population densities have far less available space. Even though the population density of Spokane is on the higher side, there is a greater opportunity in finding available city-owned land.

It is important to note that for the City of Boise, they distinguish their dog areas into 2 categories: Dog Parks and unfenced Off-Leash Areas. For the purpose of these guidelines, we are looking at dog parks specifically. However, values for off-leash areas have been included for Boise in case Spokane would consider providing off-season, unfenced dog use in some of the already established parks.

Spokane scores moderately well already when looking at total acreage of dog parks, at 0.41 acres per 10,000 people. To match Boise's calculated LOS rate of 0.86 acres per 10,000 residents, the City would need to add an additional 10.33 acres for a total of 19.69 acres. For **0.75 acre per 10,000 people** (which is what is proposed), Spokane would need to **designate a total of 17.17 acres** of city-owned land for dog parks.

Image A.1 - HIgh Bridge Dog Park provides a large mulch area for dogs and their humans to socialize.

DOG PARK SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

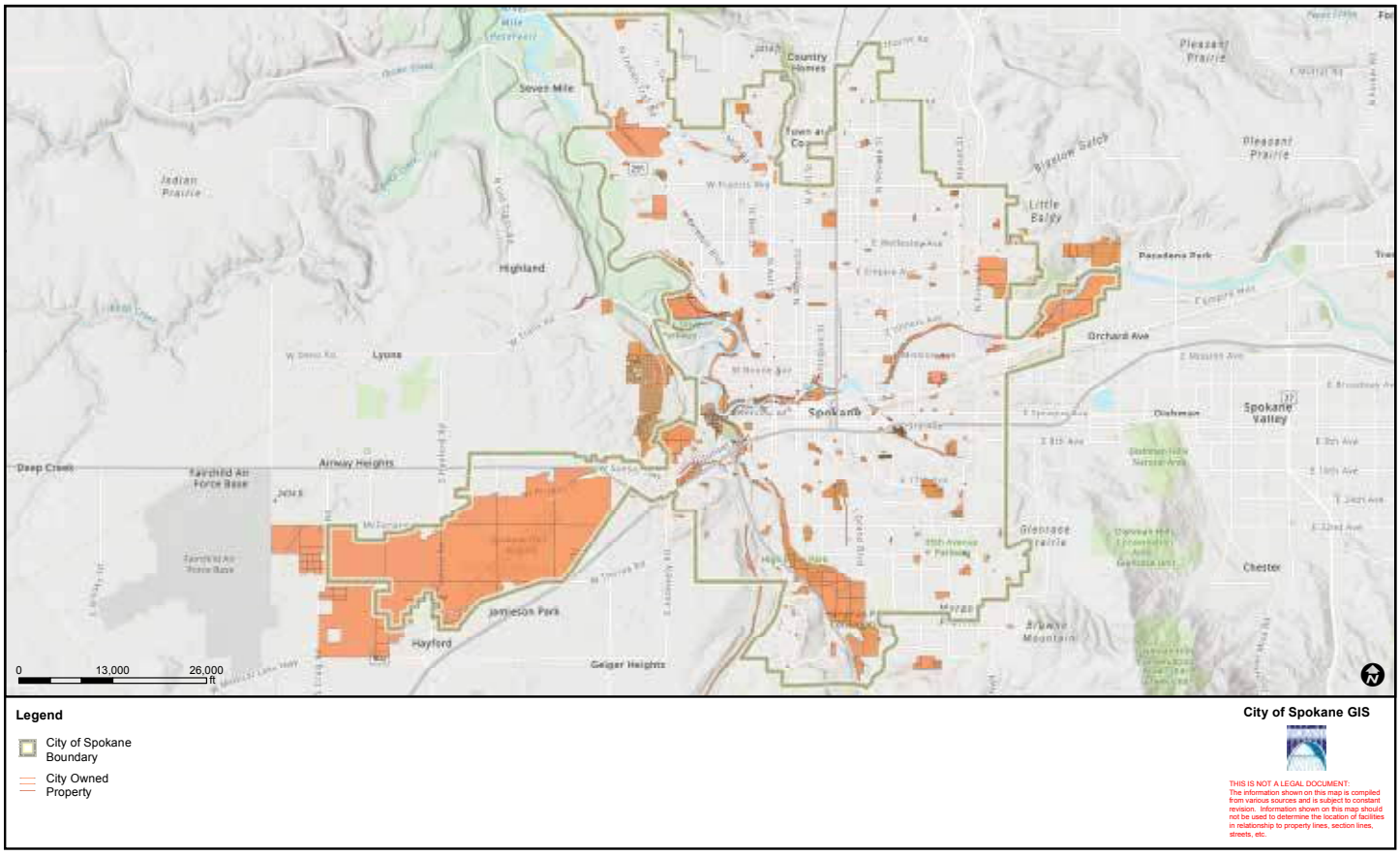
While they are a highly desired use, dog parks have some issues that require careful consideration when selecting their location, placement, and design. Based on research from municipalities across the U.S. and guidance from the Dog Park PAC, the City has prepared the following site selection and placement criteria for future dog parks. These criteria create a score for each park and are intended to guide discussions on where dog parks are most needed and desired in the City and make provisions for their location within existing City-owned properties. The critieria guide not only the location of the park but its general size, potential impacts, mitigations, and expected audience.

Dog park placement critieria have been divided into three scoring tiers starting with a City-wide examanation at Tier 1. Tiers 2 and 3 use weighted scoring to hone in on specific locations for dog parks. Tier 2 critieria help determine which properties are best suited for dog parks. Tier 3 criteria then examine specific locations within properties for potential impacts and mitigations to determine a best location based on the highest scoring placement.

Tier 1: Size and Distribution Criteria

To begin assessing potential properties, the first step was to create an inventory of all city-owned property. From there, properties were eliminated if they included certain restrictions. These restrictions were pre-determined before developing a list of potential properties.

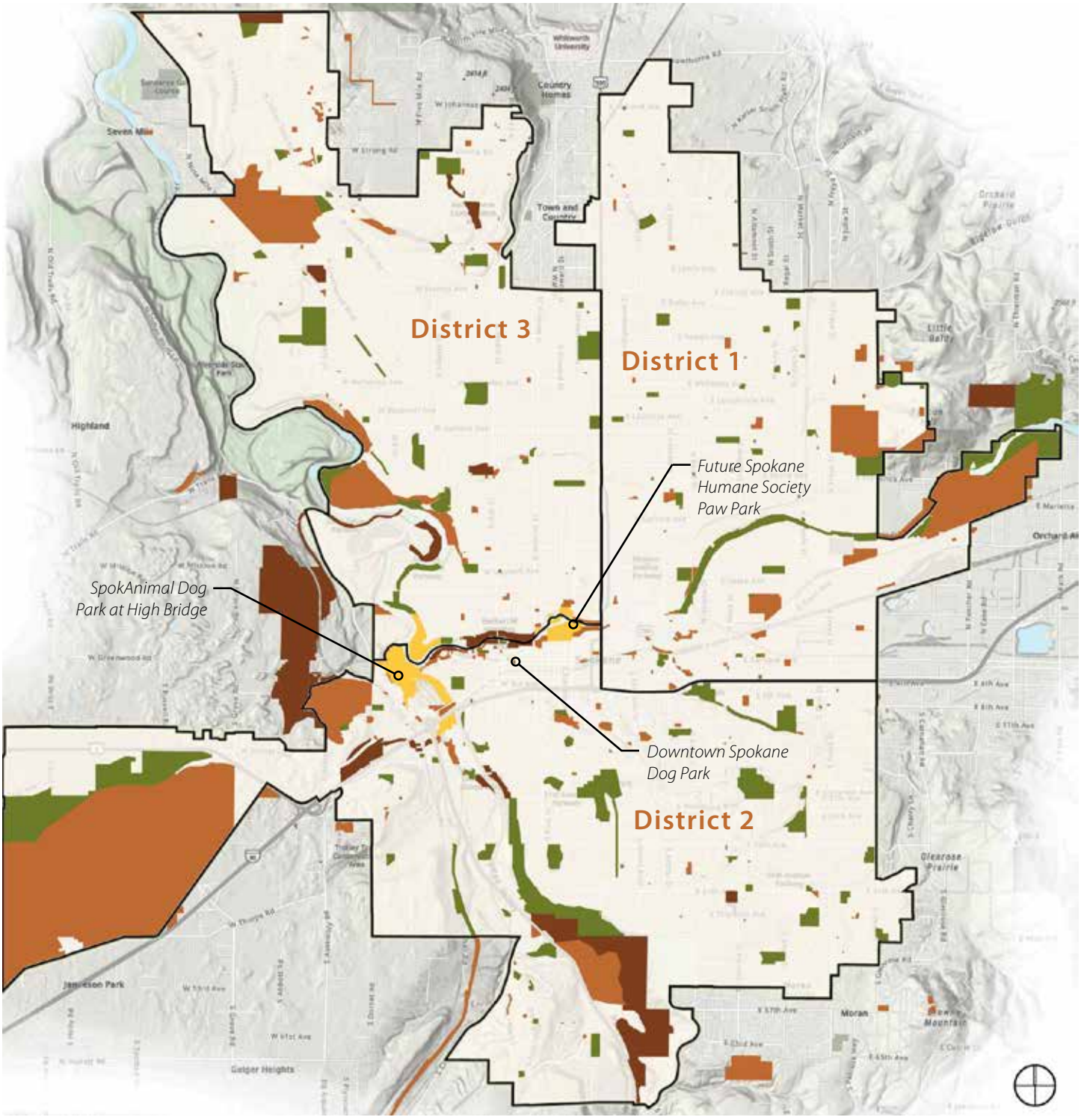
- Lack of pedestrian access
- No parking lot or on-street parking adjacent
- Land fully programmed or fully occupied
- Total continguous land <0.5 acres
- Property too steep to develop (>2:1 slope)
- Current golf course location
- Waste locations (occupied landfills, WWTP)
- Airports
- Designated park natural lands (conservation land, arboretum)
- Trails and parkways



Map A.1 -Inventory of City-Owned Property, Courtesy of the City of Spokane

Inventory of City-Owned Property

Overall City of Spokane Map



Legend:

- Suitable for Evaluation
- Current Dog Park Locations
- Property Deemed Unsuitable
- Natural Areas

Map A.2 -Inventory of City-Owned Property, Evaluated (Overall Map)

Any land that could not be accessed directly from the road and lands that would be too steep to traverse or develop were immediately eliminated. Properties needed to have a place nearby to park if not directly on the site to accommodate visitors. Sites located on busy arterials with no on-street parking or space to develop a parking lot would be a safety hazard.

The size of properties was also examined. Anything less than half an acre was removed from the list. There were a number of reasons why this was done which will be further discussed, but the main reasons were for safety of dogs in relation to confined spaces, and limitations to developing such a small site. Trails and parkways were also removed as these were often limited to confined spaces which would be too narrow in width to support a fenced in space in addition to existing recreation trails for people, which would need some sort of separation.

Natural lands, such as designated conservation land and arboretums were removed. Based on the recent Master Plan, residents preferred that dogs be kept out of these areas.

The last category examined was the amount of available, unprogrammed space on each parcel. Any property fully programmed was eliminated. This could include golf courses, fire and police stations, airports, material staging grounds, utility stations, and waste locations such as occupied landfills and wastewater treatment plants. Properties such as reservoirs were often left on the list because there was substantial open, unused land separate from the space occupied by the reservoirs.

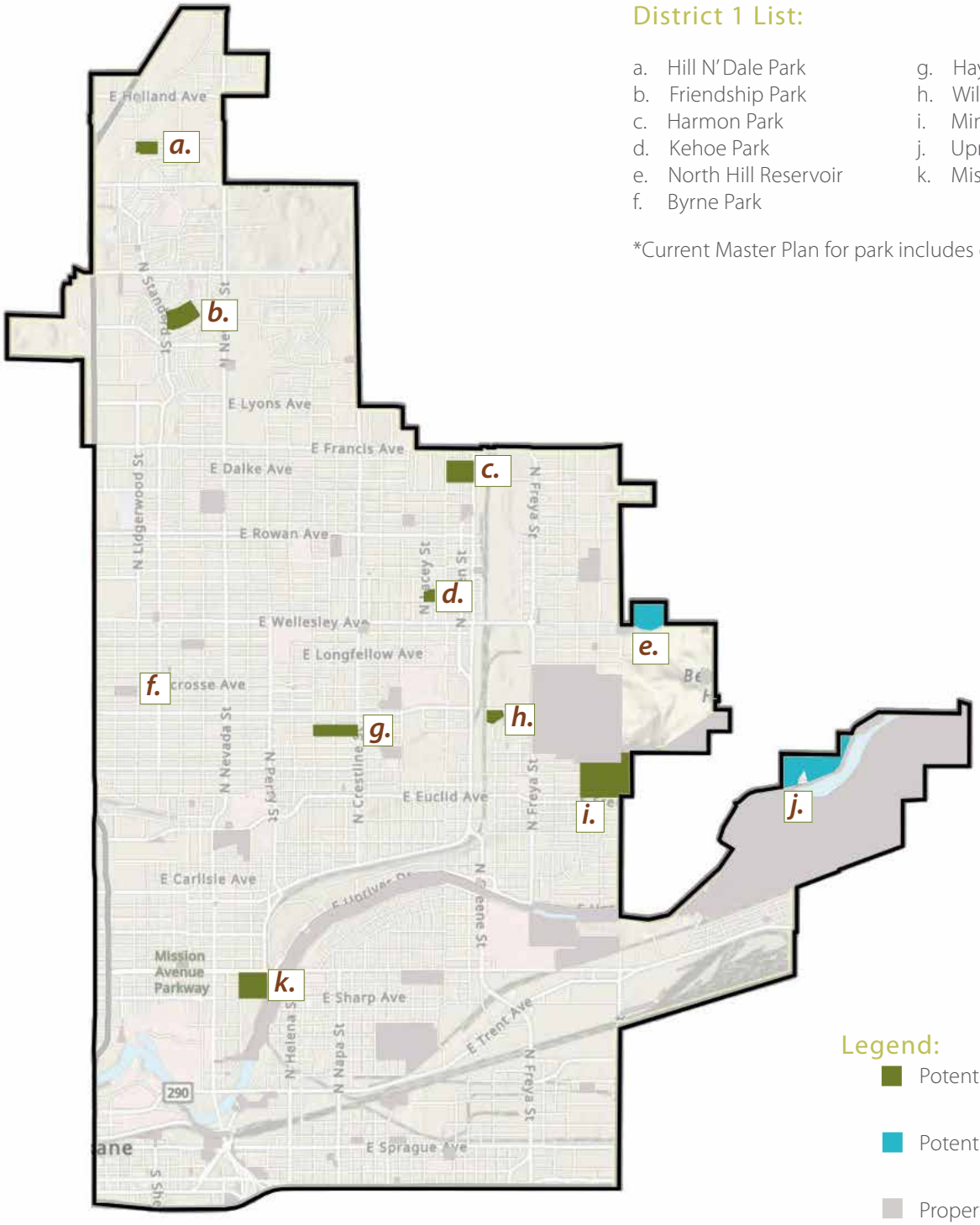
Map A.1 shows all city-owned property. All properties at least half an acre in size that could potentially be evaluated have been designated as "Suitable for Evaulation," as shown on Map A.2.

Dogs are not our whole life, but they make our lives whole.

~ Roger Caras

Inventory of City-Owned Property

District 1 Map



District 1 List:

a. Hill N' Dale Park
b. Friendship Park
c. Harmon Park
d. Kehoe Park
e. North Hill Reservoir
f. Byrne Park
g. Hays Park
h. Wildhorse Park
i. Minnehaha Park*
j. Upriver Park
k. Mission Park

*Current Master Plan for park includes dog park program.

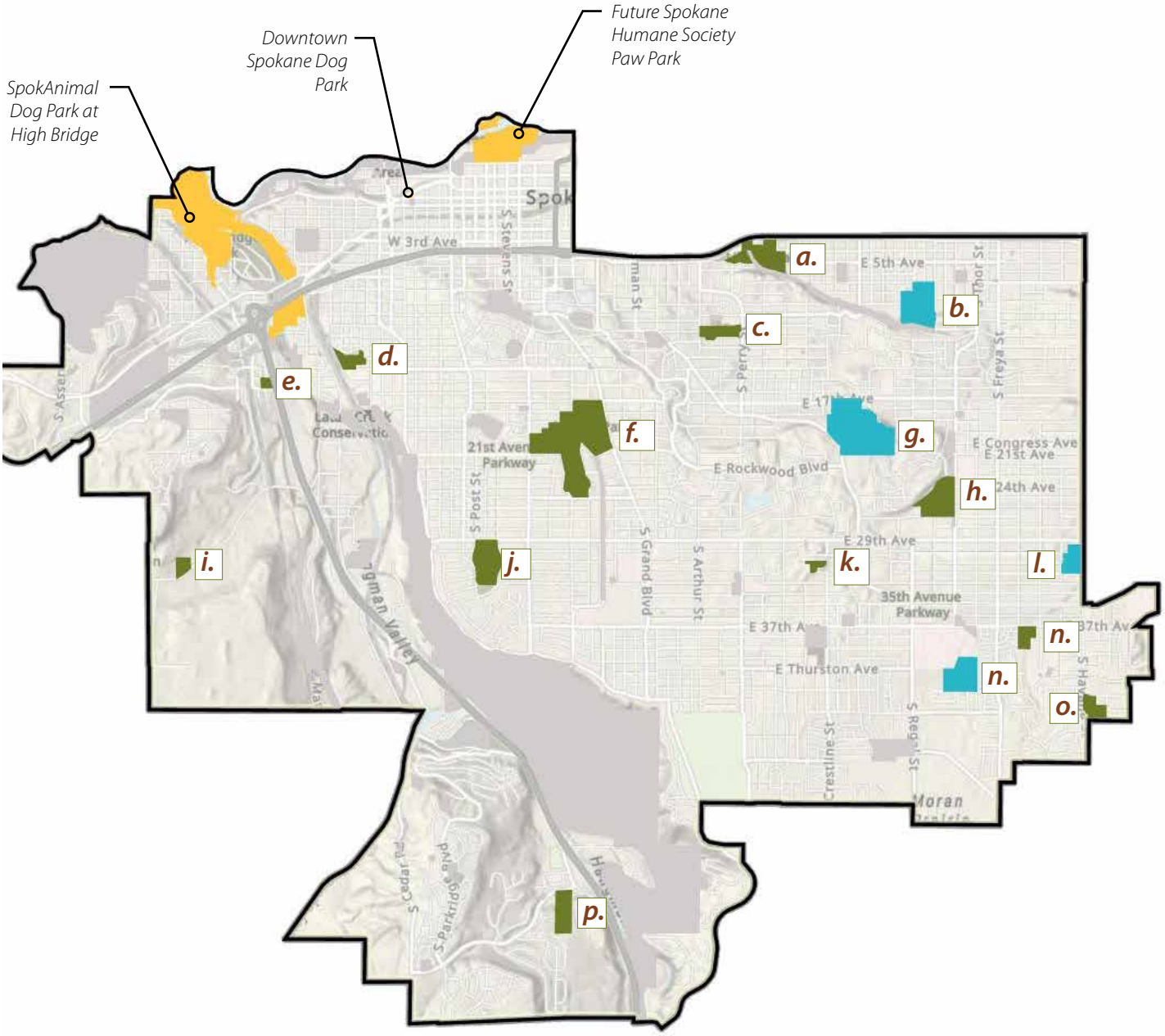
Legend:

- Potential Evaluation - 1.00 - 6.99 ac. Available
- Potential Evaluation - 7.00 ac. + Available
- Property Deemed Unsuitable
- Current Dog Park Locations

Map A.3 -Inventory of City-Owned Property (District 1)

Inventory of City-Owned Property

District 2 Map



District 2 List:

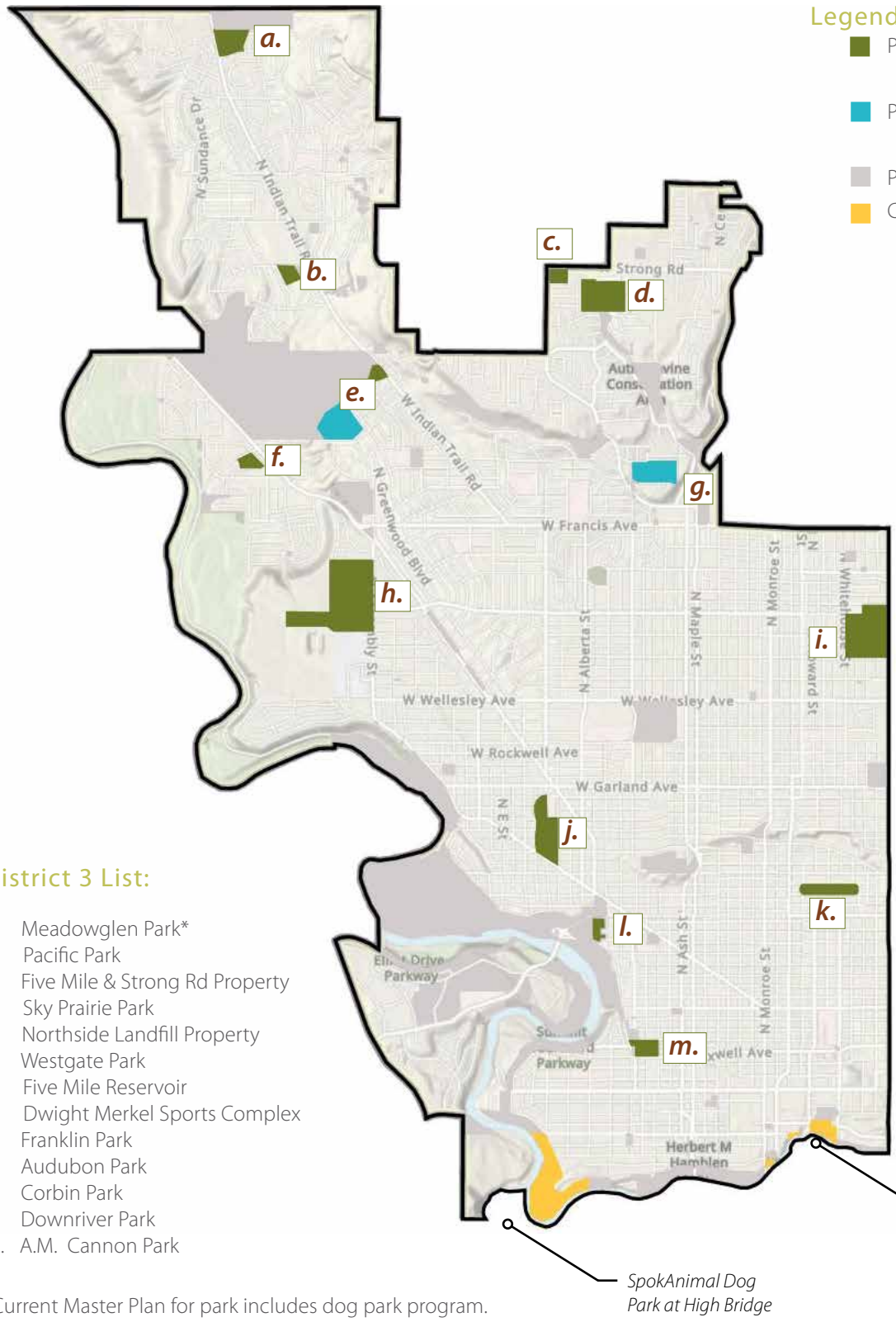
a. Liberty Park*
b. Underhill Park
c. Grant Park
d. Polly Judd Park
e. Fish Lake Trail Property
f. Manito Park
g. Lincoln Park
h. Thornton Murphy Park
j. Thorpe Road Reservoir
j. Comstock Park
k. Garden Park Water Tank
l. Frog Ponds
m. 37th Ave Stormwater Facility
n. Hazel's Creek Stormwater Facility
o. Ben Burr Park
p. Fire Station 5

*Current Master Plan for park includes dog park program.

Map A.4 -Inventory of City-Owned Property (District 2)

Inventory of City-Owned Property

District 3 Map



Legend:

- Potential Evaluation - 1.00 - 6.99 ac. Available
- Potential Evaluation - 7.00 ac. + Available
- Property Deemed Unsuitable
- Current Dog Park Locations

District 3 List:

a. Meadowglen Park*
b. Pacific Park
c. Five Mile & Strong Rd Property
d. Sky Prairie Park
e. Northside Landfill Property
f. Westgate Park
g. Five Mile Reservoir
h. Dwight Merkel Sports Complex
i. Franklin Park
j. Audubon Park
k. Corbin Park
l. Downriver Park
m. A.M. Cannon Park

*Current Master Plan for park includes dog park program.

Map A.5 - Inventory of City-Owned Property (District 3)

Based on available properties, research from other communities, and responses from the Citywide Dog Park Committee (CDPC), it made the most sense to divide dog parks into three categories based on size and area demands:

1. ***Community Facility - over 7 acres***
2. ***Neighborhood Facility - between 1 and 6.99 acres***
3. ***Pocket Facility - less than 1 acre***

Community Facilities

Community facilities are large open-space areas that can support a high population of dogs and users. These regional attractions are auto-oriented, where a majority of users would ideally drive no more than 20 minutes to reach the park.

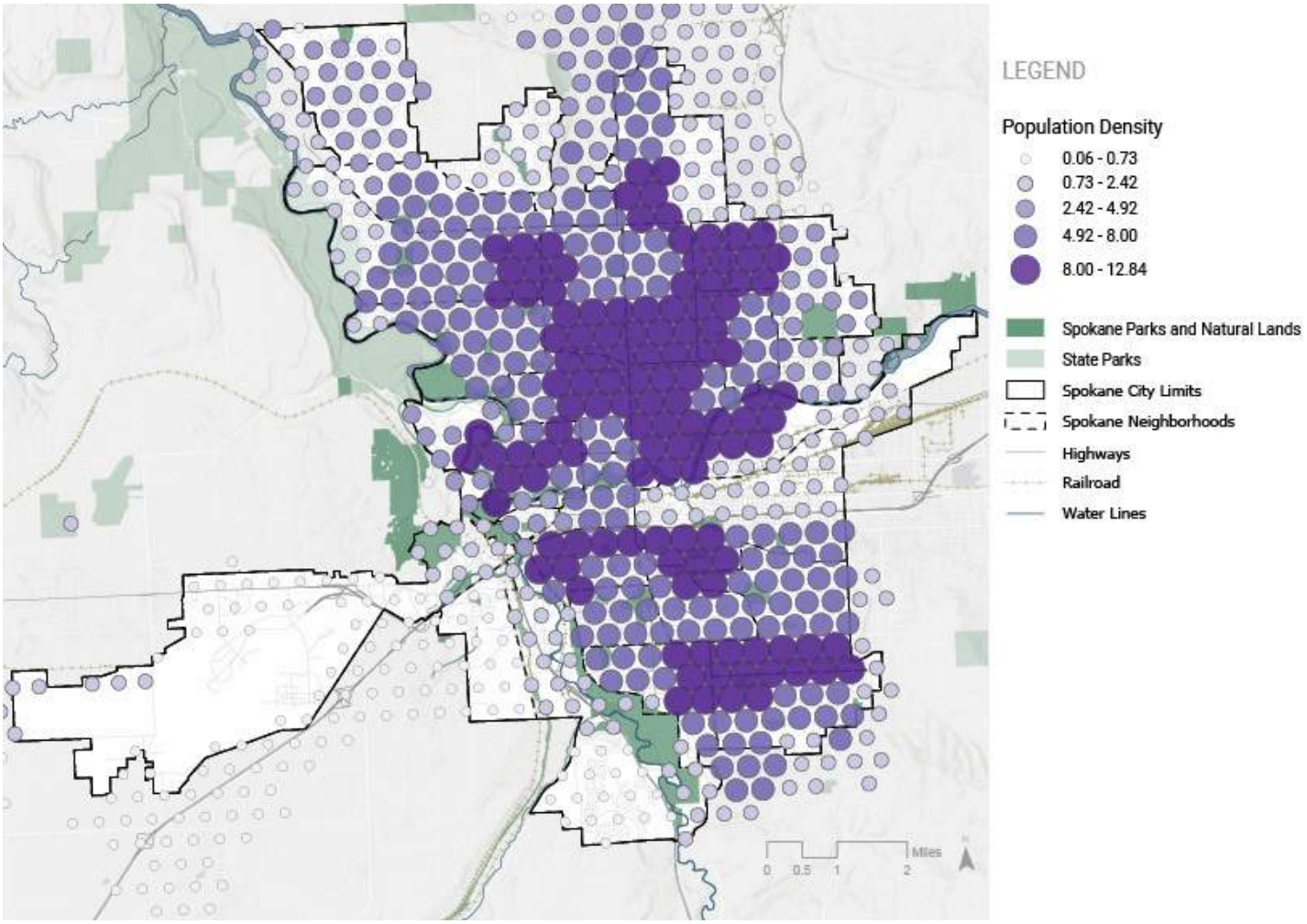
Neighborhood Facilities

Neighborhood facilties are intended to be moderately sized and serve a balance of walking and driving user populations. Walking distance for these facilities is generally no more than 15 minutes and they may attract drivers up to 15 minutes away. The facility needs equal design focus on walkable connections and parking.

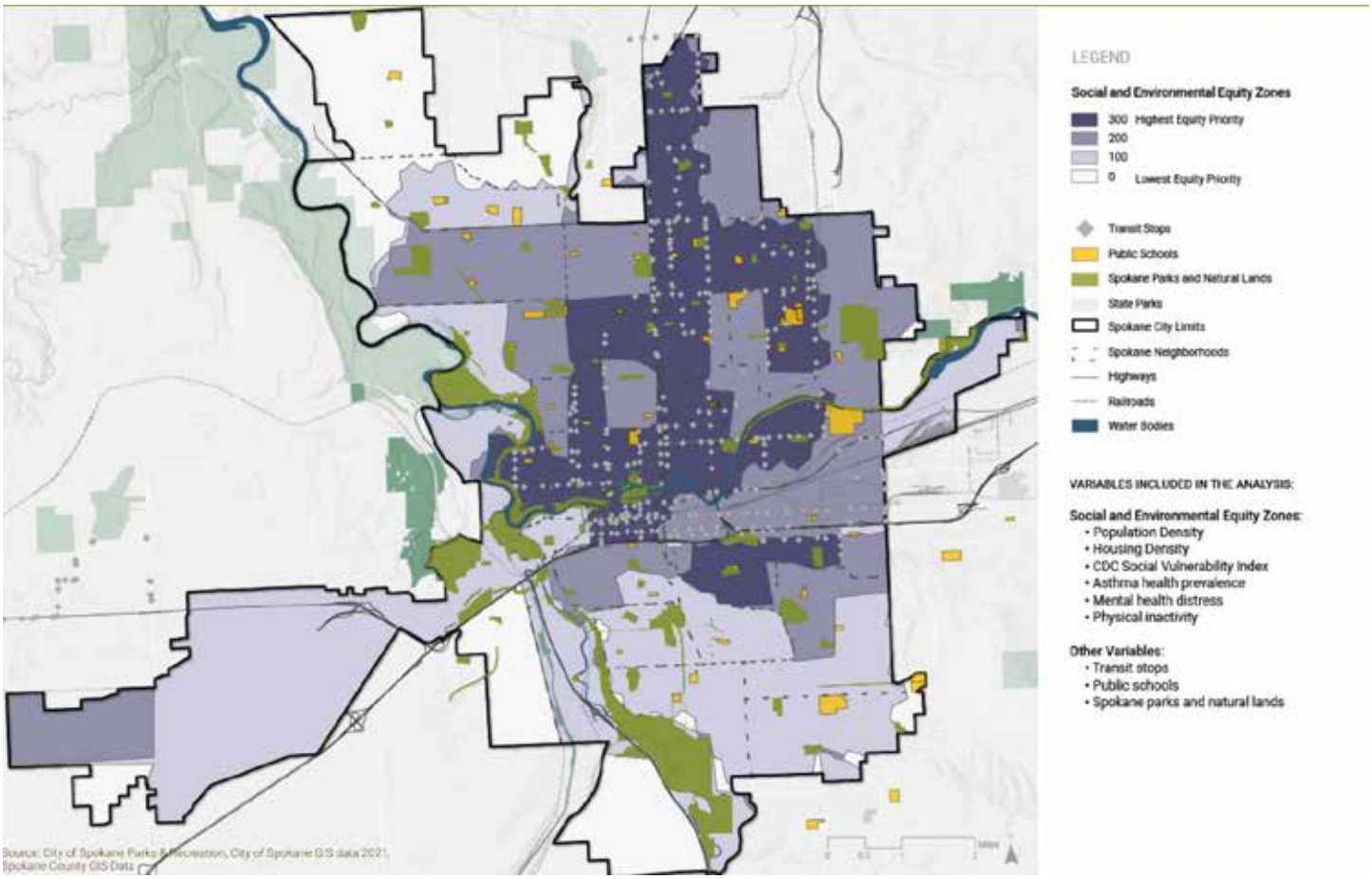
Pocket Facilities

Pocket Facilities are a great use of small under-utilized properties. These facilities are used almost exclusively by users walking to the site and tend to be concentrated in urban high-density areas with multi-family housing or single-family lots with minimal yard space. Since the potential locations of these properties are not examined in these guidelines, there is more flexibility in where these can be located. This also provides freedom for people to apply for a specific location to be considered.

The City has determined that the desired distribution of these facilties should be for each district to have at least one community and one neighborhood facility. This would spread out the facilities so that no area other than the airport would be more than a 20-minute drive from a Community



Map A.6 - Population Density Map. Courtesy of the City of Spokane Parks and Natural Lands Master Plan Draft, dated May 2022.



Map A.7 - Equity Zone Map. Courtesy of the City of Spokane Parks and Natural Lands Master Plan Draft, dated May 2022.

Facility. Ideally, the neighborhood facility in each district will be placed so that the majority of the district is within a 10-minute drive of a larger-sized dog park. Pocket facilities would be located in a manner that allows less mobile populations the opportunity to socialize and exercise their pets. Maps A.3 - A.5 show all properties in each individual district. These only show properties that could support community and neighborhood facilities, as pocket parks will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. The ratio and spread of facilities may vary from district to district based on factors like lack of available larger property and population density, which is further examined as a part of Tier 2.

Tier 2: General Location Scoring

Once a list of potential properties was developed, a system was established to refine and condense the list to a more manageable size. Two sets of criteria were created and vetted by the City PAC. The first set, known as Tier 2, looks at each site as a whole and analyzes features at that specific location.

Location Criteria	Average Score	Median Score	Range	Most Common Response
Available Area	**4.4**	5	3 - 5	5
Tree Canopy	**3.7**	4	2 - 5	4 & 5
Surrounding Uses	**3.7**	4	2 - 5	4
Water Access	**3.4**	3.5	1 - 5	5
Quality Habitat / Protected Areas	**3.3**	4	1 - 5	4
Proximity to Arterials	**2.8**	3	1 - 5	4
Existing Use / Displacement	**2.5**	3	1 - 4	3
Proximity to Existing Dog Parks	**1.4**	1	1 - 3	1

Table A.4 - Tier 2 Criteria Scoring as determined by the Advisory Board.

Potential Site	Tier 2: General Location Scoring					Weighted Avg Subtotal
	Available Acreage	Surrounding Uses	Quality Habitat	Street Access	Existing Uses Displaced	
Name	Enter number of acres as (#.#)	Add points for each adjacency: Multi-family Residential - RTF, RMF, RHD (3 pt) Center and Corridor Zones - CC1-CC4 (2 pt) Commercial - O, OR, NR, NMU, CB, GC (1 pt) Industrial - LI, HI, PI (1 pt)	yes (0 pt) no (1 pt)	Direct access to arterial (2 pt) Local access roads only (1 pt) Street improvements needed (-1 pt)	None (0 pt) Minimal/Flexible (-1 pt) Significant Impact (-3 pt)	
Weight	35%	25%	10%	10%	20%	100%

Table A.5 - Tier 2 Criteria Scoring as shown in the Siting Matrix.

A sample list of criteria was compiled based on similar criteria used in other municipalities, and discussions were led regarding the importance of each. From there, each criteria was scored a rank from 1 to 5 based on how desirable that element would be when determining a location. Table A.4 shows the accumulation of scores, with the highest scoring criteria on top.

Given the information from the PAC, a design matrix spreadsheet was created to list and weigh each element based on its determined worth. Higher percentages are given to the elements that scored higher in the PAC survey, or were determined to be of higher importance after further discussion with the PAC. Some elements have negative or neutral scores as they can be seen as problematic to the location and design of the facility.

The Siting Matrix as shown in Table A.5 shows the criteria applied for all City-owned properties within City limits. Tier 2 criteria is defined as follows:

Total Site Acreage: Total area of City-Owned property in one contiguous area. Not all of the area counted may be suited for a dog park, and is therefore not calculated in the scoring.

Available Acreage: A rough estimate of how much open, unused property is available in a portion of the site. This may or may not include area calculated for parking, access to the fenced areas, and buffers needed.

Surrounding Uses: Scoring based on nearby zoning. More points are given to areas that support multi-family residential development and areas such as Center and Corridor Zones that focus on revitalizing particular regions and support growth there. Refer to the City of Spokane Zoning Map for the location of adjacent zones.

Quality Habitat: Property that is relatively undisturbed and supports the habitation of wildlife and native flora. Displacing or destroying this habitation could be seen as undesirable, so no points are given to these properties. These sites may need further mitigation to provide separation between uses.

Street Access: The level of complication for getting to the site. Direct access to an arterial makes it easy to find the dog park and easy to get in and out. A local road may be more confusing to traverse and cause more disruption to neighbors. For sites that require the added cost of new or improved streets in order to provide pedestrian and parking access, a negative score is given.

Image A.2 - Walking paths and trails are highly desirable for humans and their companions to feel secluded and to engage in exercise.

Existing Uses Displaced: The amount of existing programmed uses directly located at or adjacent to the proposed dog park site that would be displaced. Uses may include walking trails, picnic areas, or open fields. The more substantial the list, the lower the score. Some uses can be rerouted or relocated. Certain sites such as current multi-use sports fields that are used as informal flex space would be highly affected, especially if this is the only space available on the property for that use. PAC members felt that the displacement of some of these uses was highly problematic.

The presence of water bodies was explored but ultimately removed from the list since the City expressed that they

Placement Criteria	Average Score	Median Score	Range	Most Common Response
Accessibility	**4.4**	4.5	3 - 5	5
Existing Street Parking	**3.9**	4	3 - 5	4
Buffers Needed	**3.7**	4	2 - 5	4
Existing Trees	**3.7**	4	2 - 5	4
Existing On-Site Parking	**3.4**	4	1 - 5	4
Existing Utilities	**3.2**	3	2 - 5	2, 3 & 4
Existing Shade Structures	**3.2**	3	1 - 5	3
Existing Lighting	**2.8**	3	1 - 4	3 & 4
Existing Restrooms	**2.7**	3	1 - 4	3
Existing Irrigation	**2.5**	3	1 - 4	3

Table A.6 - Tier 3 Criteria Scoring as determined by the Advisory Board.

would prefer that dogs not have access to this. Having a water body such as a stream or wetland within the fenced area would be very costly and challenging to maintain its ecological integrity and usability. For sites that do provide these features, it is recommended to fence outside of these sensitive areas to avoid additional mitigation.

At one point the proximity to bus routes was also examined. Locating dog parks near public transit would be beneficial to those who do not have other means of transportation. Unfortunately Spokane Transit Authority does not allow dogs on their buses at this time unless they can be contained on a lap or in a crate. Since the option of using a bus is not available to many dog owners, this was omitted from the list of criteria.

The last criteria point that was omitted was proximity to existing dog parks. Although this can still be unofficially considered in regards to current dog park locations, it was challenging to determine how to measure this prior to siting more dog parks. A better way of looking at the situation is to look at individual districts as a whole and the distribution of potential properties within the districts. Most properties under consideration are already spread apart, and other criteria such as acreage seemed to matter more to PAC members.

Tier 3: Site Specific Scoring

Tier 3 evaluates specific unprogrammed locations within a given City property to determine the best location for a future dog park. For some of the larger sites, several diverse options have been explored. These criteria examine potential impacts and the costs for mitigations, infrastructure, and improvements. Sites requiring less construction of infrastructure and buffers will score higher as they can likely be funded and constructed in a more timely fashion.

The City PAC again evaulated a list of criteria and ranked each in order of importance, as seen in Table A.6. Note that some criteria look at existing features that are currently availble somewhere on site, whereas other criteria look at the plausibility or level of ease in adding certain features.

Tier 3: Site Specifi					
Terrain	**Accessibility to Facility**	**Import Needed**	**Residential Buffers Needed**	**Activity Buffers Needed**	**Mitiga Buffers N**
Flat (4 pt) Rolling (2 pt) Steep (0 pt)	Easily capable of being ADA compliant (2 pt) Challenging to add ADA accessibility (0 pt)	None anticipated (2 pt) Some anticipated (1 pt) Significant anticipated (0 pt)	None (2 pt) Street buffer only (1 pt) Adjacent (0 pt)	None (2 pt) Sports/playgrounds (0 pt)	None (2 pt) Required (0 p
10%	15%	5%	10%	15%	5%

Table A.7 - Tier 3 Criteria Scoring as shown in the Siting Matrix.

The Siting Matrix as shown in Table A.7 defines the Tier 3 criteria as follows:

Terrain: The relative steepness or unevenness of a site. Having topographical variation can be seen as desirable, but too much variation may make a site less accessible to certain crowds. Steep slopes that are degraded by dog use may also erode at a faster rate.

Accessibility: The ability to create an ADA compliant pathway from the parking area to the entrance of the dog park. This also looks at the accessibility immediately inside the fenced area, and how easy it would be to add a nearby gathering space for people of all abilities.

Import Needed: The need to provide imported fill to areas of rough terrain. Certain sites are more rocky such as Lincoln Park, which contains solid bedrock. These types of sites would need added soil to even out the surface. The more that is needed, the higher the price tag.

Residential Buffers Needed: The need for buffers based on proximity to exisiting residences. Some areas may just need a visual screening if viewed from a distance, whereas other dog parks that immediately abut the backyards of houses will need a more dense visual and sound buffer.

Activity Buffers Needed: The need for buffers based on proximity to exisiting activities, such as sports fields, courts and playgrounds. Many dogs are not familiar with these uses and may become anxious if they can see what is going on around them. Children also may be nervous around dogs if they can see them. Providing separation through distance as well as a vegetative screen helps define these uses as distinctly different.

Mitigation Buffers Needed: The need for buffers based on proximity to sensitive natural areas such as wetlands and creeks. Vegetative buffers can absorb or filter contaminants from that would otherwise end up downstream.

Street Parking Available: Parking spaces along the street that are currently provided adjacent to the property. Adding street parking would be too challenging if it is even a possibility. Unless a new road was constructed, this would be unlikely to change.

Off-Street Parking: The presence of a parking lot on the site. Sites that currenly have adequate parking stalls available score the highest. Sites that are not graded properly for a parking lot or otherwise do not have the space or access for one are not ranked.

Tree Canopy: The presence of mature trees on the site. The more trees there are, the more favorable shade is provided. Having little to no trees means that some other form of shade, such as a shade structure, would be highly advised to be added.

Utilities: The presence of utilities on the site or along the roads adjacent to the property. These may include water, power, or sewer lines. For existing parks slated for improvements, routing utilities would not be too challenging. However, it would be challening and costly to add all-new utilities to a region that does not provide it currently.

Lighting: The presence of lighting at or around the location of the proposed dog park. This may include street lights, large overhead lights within parks, or lighting on restroom or storage buildings. Since additional lighting would likely need to be added to any design, this was ranked low.

t Scoring							
tion leeded	Street Parking Available	Off-Street Parking	Tree Canopy	Utilities	Lighting	Restrooms	Weighted Avg Subtotal
pt)	Yes (3 pt) No (0 pt)	Existing (3 pt) Possible (1 pt) Not possible (0 pt)	Heavy (3 pt) Some (1 pt) Nothing on-site (-1 pt)	Exist on-site (2 pt) Nearby (1 pt) Nothing nearby (-1 pt)	Exist on-site (2 pt) Nearby (1 pt) Nothing nearby (-1 pt)	Exist on-site (2 pt) Nearby (1 pt) Nothing nearby (0 pt)	
	8%	8%	15%	4%	3%	2%	100%

Site Name	District	Available Acreage	Tier 2 Subtotal	Tier 3 Subtotal2	Grand Total
Northside Sanitary Landfill (Large)	3	21.2	8.07	1.16	9.23
Upriver Park	1	13	4.75	1.88	6.63
Five Mile Reservoir	3	9.3	4.11	1.84	5.95
Underhill Park	2	7.2	3.37	1.82	5.19
North Hill Reservoir	1	8.2	2.82	1.66	4.48
Lincoln Park	2	7.5	3.58	0.82	4.40
Hazel's Creek	2	7.1	2.39	1.53	3.92
Hill N'Dale Park	1	1.8	1.73	2.12	3.85
Thornton Murphy Park	2	1.2	2.22	1.61	3.83
Manito Park Option 3 (North Option)	2	1.2	1.47	2.32	3.79
Franklin Park	3	1.5	1.38	2.11	3.49
Grant Park	2	1.4	0.99	2.41	3.40
Harmon Park	1	1	1.55	1.83	3.38
A.M. Cannon Park	3	1	1.45	1.81	3.26
Mission Park	1	1	0.80	2.38	3.18
Meadowglen Park	3	1.1	1.34	1.84	3.18
Dwight Merkel Sports Complex	3	1.6	1.61	1.47	3.08
Hays Park	1	1.5	0.83	2.25	3.08
Pacific Park	3	1.6	1.81	1.24	3.05
Manito Park Option 1(West Option)	2	2.8	1.18	1.82	3.00
Manito Park Option 2 (East Option)	2	2.8	1.08	1.92	3.00
Northside Sanitary Landfill (Small)	3	3.4	1.84	1.16	3.00
Comstock Park	2	2.3	0.91	2.08	2.99
Corbin Park	3	2.4	0.84	2.14	2.98
Five Mile & Strong Rd Property	3	4	1.70	1.24	2.94
Westgate Park	3	1.3	1.31	1.62	2.93
Fire Station 5	2	5	1.45	1.46	2.91
Thorpe Road Reservoir	2	1.6	0.56	2.27	2.83
Minnehaha Park	1	3	1.25	1.56	2.81
Fish Lake Trail Property	2	1.7	0.70	1.94	2.64
Sky Prairie Park	3	4.6	1.11	1.51	2.62
37th Ave Stormwater Facility	2	2.8	1.18	1.44	2.62
Garden Park Water Tank	2	1.8	1.28	1.28	2.56
Downriver Stormwater Facility	3	2.8	1.08	1.41	2.49
Wildhorse Park	1	1.2	0.67	1.64	2.31
Frog Ponds	2	3.9	1.27	1.03	2.30
Kehoe Park	1	1	0.70	1.55	2.25
Audubon Park	3	1	0.65	1.58	2.23
Liberty Park	2	0.5	1.13	1.03	2.16
Friendship Park	1	1	0.35	1.62	1.97
Polly Judd Park	2	1	0.45	1.48	1.93
Ben Burr Park	2	1	0.05	1.71	1.76

Table A.8 - Ranked score of all potential dog park properties

Restrooms: The presence of a restroom facility somewhere on the property. Structures within close proximity were given a higher score.

After examining the sites, none of the potential candidates had existing shade structures. Therefore that criteria was omitted. Existing irrigation was also removed because not all sites would need irrigation depending on the surfacing used. For those that would need it, the system would more than likely need to be retrofitted or fully replaced to meet the design intents

A total of 39 properties spread out between the three districts were examined when filling out the Siting Matrix. A few of those properties (Manito Park and the Northside Sanitary Landfill) examined several locations on the property. These large sites varied in features depending on where you were located and would offer very different types of dog park experiences. Based on the criteria determined by the PAC, the following properties ranked the highest (see Table A.8). These include both community and neighborhood-sized properties. From here, the Spokane Parks Board can take this criteria and determine which locations would best serve as a dog park.

District 1:

1. Upriver Park
2. North Hill Reservoir
3. Hill N'Dale Park
4. Harmon Park

District 2:

1. Underhill Park
2. Lincoln Park
3. Hazel's Creek Stormwater Facility
4. Thornton Murphy Park
5. Manito Park

District 3:

1. Northside Sanitary Landfill
2. Five Mile Reservoir
3. Franklin Park
4. A.M. Cannon Park

PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS

On August 9, 2022, a 20 question survey was released to the public. Questions ranged from demographics to desired site features. A total of 1,158 respondents participated, and many people provided written responses in addition to the poll questions.

Most responses supported the priorities established by the PAC members. Features like existing tree canopies and flat, accessible sites scored high while features like existing restrooms had less of an impact on people. The level of service metric that was refined by the PAC members also seemed to hold up. There was fairly even spread between those who wanted smaller, walkable facilitities and those who wanted larger, drivable options. In the end, there was a slight preference for the later (at 56%).

An interesting revelation was that a significant amount of people were concerned in preserving natural land. Although none of the properties analyzed are designated conservation or natural lands by City Parks classifications, many were worried that the undeveloped areas perceived as natural would be disturbed or diminished. Most would consider shrinking the size of the dog park if it meant minimizing or avoiding the impact on undeveloped lands.

Image A.3 - Natural feeling open space reminiscent of the native Spokane landscape provides a level of familiarity and comfort to both the owner and their pet.

Even if dog parks are not located in natural or seemingly natural lands, that is the desired look and feel that survey participants voted for. 61% of people wanted a "natural" feel that represents the local Spokane landscape, followed by large turf fields at just 19%.

Parking did not seem to be as big of a factor. Although most wanted parking provided nearby, there wasn't a strong push towards preferring off-street parking lots over on-street parking. That will give more flexibility for neighborhood facilities in particular which may not host a large number of visitors at a time.

Having existing utilities on site scored high as well. This is likely because people want to ensure water and lighting are provided at parks. Some potential sites may have utilities nearby that can be tapped into, but other more rural sites will require more work to add these features.

Access to bodies of water such as the Spokane River was highly advocated for in the comments section of the survey. People wanted their dogs to be able to swim, which is a dog park use not currently provided. This was highly analyzed throughout the site selection process. Although this could create a unique experience that draws in people from far away, we found a number of flaws that would limit our options:

- Not all river access is city-owned
- Much of the city-owned property is designated as natural area
- Most of the available land is located at High Bridge or neighboring Peoples' Park, which is in close proximity to the existing dog park there.
- Land is too steep to allow for safe pedestrian or vehicular access
- Certain portions of the Spokane River are fast-moving and too dangerous for direct access. Advertising this option as a safe public space could open up Parks to more liabilities.
- Static water bodies can harbor more diseases that dogs are susceptable to
- Providing access to the water would negatively impact riparian buffers by disturbing wildlife habitat and degrading vegetation.

Based on this list of limitations and the limited availability of potential sites that included water access or riparian areas in the first place, we would advise not pursuing this option. If there is enough evidence compiled that would contradict any of these points and enough support was rallied behind the idea, considering areas with water bodies could be analyzed on a case-by-case basis.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS FOR ESTABLISHING NEW DOG PARKS

All new dog parks will be required to participate in a public engagement process to address public concerns about the potential benefits and risks of proposed off-leash areas. Proposed plans for off-leash areas should be published in order to facilitate public feedback. Various stakeholders, including dog owners, non-dog owners, adjoining property owners, and park user groups should be consulted prior to initiating off-leash dog park development.

Neighborhoods have a critical role in the formation of dog parks. As such, citizens should be involved in all phases of the process from site selection to design to maintenance. The Parks department can have suggestions, but it is the general public who determines if a new dog park is feasible or even desired at a specific location.

Park improvements over 1-acre will be required to participate in a SEPA process during permitting. The public engagement process will be used to inform SEPA. The SEPA process should not be used in lieu of specific outreach for dog parks.

After construction, ongoing communication between City Parks and stakeholders may also alleviate concerns and prevent conflicts. Online polls, email lists, or scheduled meetings allowing park users and nearby residents to communicate park-related concerns with Parks may inform ongoing park evaluation and improvements in response to perceived risks. The suggested cadence for formal check-ins is:

1. 30-days after opening
2. 6-months after opening
3. 1-year after opening & once per year following

POTENTIAL IMPACTS & MITIGATION

Mitigation considerations are very important for the selection and design processes. Many of these impacts are inevitable, and many can be reduced or avoided based on where a dog park is located. Tables A.8 and A.9 line out potential impacts and the mitigations that should be examined.

Social & Environmental Impacts

Potential Impact	Potential Mitigations
Traffic: Adding dog park activity will generate more trips on nearby streets.	• Locate facilities and parking near arterials. • Discourage use of residential streets for parking.
Noise: Barking dogs will disrupt quiet neighborhoods, park spaces, and wildlife.	• Provide vegetated buffers between residential uses, wildlife spaces and the dog park perimeter fencing.
Odor: Urine and feces odors will be pronounced during hot weather.	• Provide readily accessible waste bags to encourage all park users to clean up after their dogs. • Consider closing the park temporarily if owners are not picking up after their pets. • Consider the use of odor-eliminating fertilizers in high traffic areas. • Rotate locations of "vertical targets" that might attract dogs to help reduce urine concentrations in one area.
Light Pollution: Too intense of lighting may disrupt nearby residents.	• Provide downturned, shielded fixtures with warm-colored LEDs or CFLs. • Avoid adding excessive quantities of fixtures throughout the site. Focus on locations that provide a level of protection for park users. • Limit the time lights are on to only when the dog park is open.
Water Consumption: Irrigation may be required for washing down surfaces. Dog parks would need access to city water to provide irrigation infrastructure, which would increase water use.	• Select surface materials that do not require being washed down. • Set watering windows late at night or early in the morning to increase efficiency and avoid muddy conditions during hours of use. • Select water-wise irrigation that avoids runoff. Consider the use of bubblers near trees.
Water Contamination: Erosion runoff from denuded dog park soils will contaminate streams, rivers, and waterbodies. Urine and feces contamination will lead to algae blooms.	• Consider treating dog park surfaces similar to paved PGS with requirements to contain and infiltrate runoff. • Provide vegetated buffers between dog parks and water bodies. • If swimming is desired, provide artificial pools.
Ground Disturbance: Overcompaction, erosion, and digging due to dog behavior and park operations can alter existing site conditions and impact ecological health both within and outside of designated dog areas.	• Select surface materials that encourage the infiltration of water, reduce ground compaction, and discourage digging. • Discourage pedestrian traffic in areas not suited for compaction, such as within a tree's critical root zone or through vegetation that can easily be trampled. Consider how the dog park design can encourage use in other areas of the park. • Add drains around areas of water to avoid pooling of water or runoff, which may cause erosion. Avoid situations where mud accumulation may occur. • Add impervious paving to areas prone to heavy wear, such as within double gate areas. • Add vegetation to areas prone to erosion, such as steep slopes.

Table A.9 - Social and Environmental Impacts

Health & Safety Impacts

Potential Impact	Potential Mitigations
Disease Exposure: Common pathogens associated with dog parks (giardia, etc.) and parasites (intentinal worms and protazoa, fleas and ticks) may infect park users, nearby neighbors, and wildlife.	• Provide signage with requirements for all participating dogs to be vaccinated and licensed. • Avoid communal water dishes for dogs unless they can drain after use, or require users to fill their own dishes. • Do not select locations that include standing bodies of water. Regrade portions of the site that include depresssions that fill with water. • Consider play structures that can be easily cleaned on a regular basis if needed. Discourage visitors from bringing in outside toys. • Consider closing the park temporarily if diseases are reported.
Heat Exposure: Overexposure to the sun and lack of protection may cause heat exhaustion and stroke to dogs and humans.	• Provide shade structures within the park. Also consider benches for areas of respite while walking around the site. • Retain as many existing trees as possible without reducing the integrity of the park. • Provide drinking fountains for humans and dogs. Consider a hose or dog-washing station to help dogs cool off.
Canine Aggression: Aggressive (or even just playful) dogs may injure owners or nearby people.	• Provide signage to educate owners on how to recognize play vs. agressive behavior. Include emergency vet phone numbers. • Separate large and small dogs. Consider separating out spaces for timid dogs as well. • Set maximum occupancy to avoid overcrowding. • Consider controlled access - Provide key fob access or require dog passes obtained during licensing to filter out those who are not willing to follow rules. • Provide transparent fencing so that owners can assess conditions before entering. • Double gates can avoid interactions between leashed and unleashed pets. Consider a staggered staging area with self-closing and self-latching hardware. Avoid corner entrances and angles in the fencing equal to or less than 90 degrees.
Safety: Limited visibility and potential blind spots may lead to unwanted, unsafe behavior.	• Provide lighting at all parking lots, entrances, and structures. • Illuminate any potential blind spots around the site. • Thin out areas of thick vegetation to avoid hiding spots and unwanted habitation. • Locate parking within close proximity to the dog park. • Avoid large, site-obstructing structures on the site. • Ensure landscape buffers are at least partially see-through for visibility. Buffers can help provide separation between different park uses. • Consider installing an official roving security team to check in on different dog parks. Adding extra eyes to a space can help ensure rules are abided by and unwanted behavior is squelched. • Provide ADA accessible paths free of obstruction and appropriate for users of wheeled devices.

Table A.10 - Health and Safety Impacts

PART 2

DESIGN GUIDELINES

SITE FEATURES

Facilities

Each type of facility comes with with its own unique set of design guidelines. Not all sized facilities can support the same features. The features listed below serve as suggestions based on what has worked for other municipalities and what advisory board members ranked as being important.

Community Facility

Due to the large population of dogs and owners these facilities serve, large areas of un-programmed open-space park property is ideal. Placement should include provisions for adequate parking, buffers from adjacent uses, and the suitability of the land to support the use of dogs. The site should have permeable soils and be located so that runoff does not impact areas outside the dog park or water bodies. Ideally, the majority of the facility will be visible from surrounding public streets or properties.

Image B.1 - Point Defiance Dog Park in the Tacoma metropolitan area features approximately 7 acres of mature natural landscaping set within the greater Point Defiance Park.

Features:

- 7 acres or greater in size
- Primarily drivable
- Evenly distributed when possible
- Ample on-site parking available
- 2 fenced areas for small and large dog separation. Consideration for specialized fenced areas such as a space for timid dogs.
- Large socialization area
- Ball chasing area
- Walking trails
- Safety lighting at entrances for operational hours
- Set maximum occupancy to avoid overcrowding.

Neighborhood Facility

Neighborhood facilities are intended to be embedded into existing parks or other City property. These will serve more walking-oriented users, so they should be located near public rights of way ro reduce the need for dog owners to travel through other areas of a park. Parking can be shared with other park uses but consideration should be made to add parking for the new dog park use. Similar to community facilities, these include provisions for buffers from adjacent uses, and the suitability of the land to support the use of dogs. The site should prtoect areas outside the dog park, with the majority of the facility visible from the surrounding public street and property.

Features:

- Between 1 and 6.99 acres in size
- Walkable (10-15 min radius) and drivable
- Evenly distributed when possible
- Minimal off-street and/or street parking available
- 2 fenced areas for small and large dog separation.
- Large socialization area
- Ball chasing area
- Safety lighting at entrances for operational hours

Image B.2 - Cascade Hospital for Animals Dog Park in Grand Rapids, MI features a large turf area set within Cascades Township Park.

Pocket Facility

While small, these comparatively pint-sized facilities may have the most benefit for those in the most need of space to take their pets. Pocket facilities can be embeded in most parks and even occupy those "left over" pieces of public property like the small triangle that has become the Riverside Ave Dog Park. Priority for these facilities will be to locate in high-density highly urban spaces or near multi-family housing where small off-leash facilities will have greater benefit and use. Almost completly walking-oriented users will need these sites to be adjacent to public sidewalks and easily visible from surrounding streets. Residential housing should be only lightly buffered allowing surveillance of the facility.

Features:

- Less than 1 acre in size
- Walkable
- Located in high demand areas (high density, urban, etc.)
- Parking not required
- One fenced area
- Clear sightlines across the entire site
- Safety lighting throughout for operational hours

Image B.3 - The dog park at Stony Point Fashion Park in Richmond, VA features boutique finishes and a plethora of site furnishings packed within a footprint of less than a tenth of an acre.

GENERAL DESIGN

Overview

Different sites will require different design methods based on constraints and unique features. Before thinking about what elements go into the dog park, the site needs to be shaped and manipulated. The following suggestions can be implemented to help transform a baren site into a functional, enticing dog park.

Site Engineering

Grading and Drainage

Flat sites are ideal from an accessibility and erosion standpoint. Steeper sites will require erosion control in order to avoid spread of contamination and wearing of the site. Permeable soils would be ideal so that disturbances can be isolated to one area. It is also recommended that drainage be monitored and controlled on site to avoid future problems.

Protected Resources

Sensitive features that exist on the site such as wildlife habitat, native threatened vegetation, and water bodies are of concern to residents. There are concerns of contamination and destruction, especially from dogs. For sites that are complicated to work around, mitigation may be required.

Sightlines

Safety is a great concern among residents, and the easiest way to accommodate this is to provide visibilityboth inside and outside the fenced areas. A visible site leads to less hiding spaces. Owners who can see the dog park while approaching may be able to more quickly assess if the facility is too busy, or if there is an aggresive dog that is best to avoid.

Site Integration

Many participants of the PAC stated that dog parks need to capitalize what is unique to Spokane: the natural beauty of our landscape. A site that is seemingly undisturbed and models the local ecology feels more inviting and helps owners forget they are contained in a fenced dog park.

Buffers

Different sites may require different types of buffers based on their location and proximity to existing uses. It is important to identify which buffers should be required and what size they need to be so that dog parks have an appropriate setback distance. This will be further evaluated.

Design Additions

Accessibility

Each dog park needs to provide ADA access from the street or parking lot to the fenced entrance(s). In addition, participants of the survey strongly felt that at least one ADA compliant walking path should be included on the site.

Parking

Neighborhood facilities should provide at least x stalls or street parking spaces per acre. Community facilities should provide at least x stalls per acre. Parking lots should meet code requirements with a minimum of 1 van accessible parking stall.

Maintenance Access

It is advised that all facilities provide at least 1 vehicle maintenance gate per fenced area to allow maintenance crews to drive in with their trucks to lay surface material and easily clean the site. Entry points should be easily accessible from the street or other existing maintenance routes.

Lighting

It is highly recommended that all dog parks have lighting at the entrance(s) and near any parking areas at a minimum. Large gathering spaces and shelters may also benefit from illumination to provide safety during hours of operation, specifically during the winter when sunlight is limited.

Fencing

A fully enclosed dog park is more widely accepted by residents for off-leash activity, especially for small sites and locations within existing parks. Specifics on layout and fence materials are suggested in detail later in the guidelines.

Open Space

Providing large, open areas for running and playing fetch is essential for those who do not have a yard or otherwise some other place to bring their dogs off-leash. Open space could be used as a staging ground for equipment or even a large gathering space.

Walking Paths and Trails

Although not all sized facilities can support it, there is a benefit to adding walking paths within dog parks. Paths help owners navigate the site and allow for exercise. Particularly for the large community parks, having a perimeter loop at a minimum is recommended. These may be in the form of paved pathways or soft, user-made trails.

BUFFERS

Overview

Not all locations are created equal. Even the most ideal dog park location may be situated around conflicting land uses. Landscape buffers are used to create a visual and sound barrier along the fenceline of the dog park.

There are three types of buffers to consider in the design of any dog park: residential, activity, and mitigation. Each have their own purpose in providing separation from various uses. Just as there are different types of buffers to consider, there are many site-specific factors that dictate how big a buffer is or what it consists of. Each site should be analyzed separatetly to determine which methods are best suited for conditions.

Distinctions

Residential Buffers

There are two types of residential buffers to consider. The first is a visual buffer, located around the entrance either in front of the fencing or in front of the parking area. For properties that are across the street and are somewhat removed from immediate impacts of the dog park but still have to deal with distractions,, a visual buffer may be desired. This way, residents do not have direct sightlines into the fenced area.

The other type of buffer would be a screening buffer that surrounds the side and back sides of the fenced area(s). For those with backyards immediately abutting the fenced dog areas, not only would a full visual screen be beneficial to block slightlines in and out, but it could help control the sounds and smells that dog parks sometimes provides. This could best be mitigated with dense plantings or site-obscuring fencing. One caveat to this is that owners may want at least minimal sightlines to monitor for undesired behavior inside and directly outside the fenced areas.

Based on survey results, participants were fairly evenly split over whether minimal or extensive setbacks would be needed, or if no setbacks were fine as long as fencing were provided. Again, this would need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Setbacks could be extensive and provide trails for on-leash dog walkers and non-dog owners to utilize. This could also take up valuable real estate that could be better utilized in the dog park itself. A small buffer may cost less to install and maintain. but may also be more restrictive to those trying to get around the site and lead to entrapment.

Activity Buffers

In highly-programmed areas such as neighborhood parks, there may need to be separation from conflicting uses. This may include things activities such as sports courts, fields, and playgrounds. Highly active uses may serve as a distraction for dogs and may make them feel more nervous because they are not used to that kind of interaction. Not only should the comfort of the dogs be considered, but that of humans as well. Children may be uneasy being in close contact with hyper dogs. At a minimum, some kind of screening should be provided to block sightlines. Setbacks should also be considered, as there is the potential that a flyball may land behind the fencing. The distance of these setbacks would vary based on the intensity of the adjacent uses.

Mitigation Buffers

For sites that contain sensitive features, a unique mitigation buffer may be well-suited to protect these features. Features may include but are not limited to wetlands and water body access, known habitat land, or steep slopes prone to erosion. For mitigation, providing space in between dogs and these sensitive areas is vital. Setbacks should be substantial, and vegetation should be used in the setbacks to help filter contaminants and provide erosion control. Adding see-through fencing may also be warranted to provide separation while also allowing for desired sightlines through the more visually appealing vegetation.

Methods

The following methods may be considered to provide visual or sight-obscuring screens:

- See-through fencing
- Tall, site-obscuring fencing
- Densely planted landscape for screening
- Lightly planted landscape for visual relief
- Berms
- Wide vegetated setbacks

FENCING

Layout

Fenced areas will look different for different dog parks since they vary in size. For Pocket Facilities, one shared fenced area would suffice. Although a minimum of 1/2 an acre is suggested, the size is dependent on what space is available on the site. For Neighborhood and Regional Facilities that provide separate fenced areas, refer to Table B.1.

A third fenced area is highly encouraged for larger facilities that can support the space. The City can decide from there how to use the extra space. Possible uses could be a space for puppies or shy dogs to encourage positive socialization, reserved space for training classes and other activities, or maintenance rest area for turf areas that are trampled and require seasonal repair.

Image B.4 - The entry corral at the Riverside Avenue Dog Park is small, but included locking latches and a paved surface up to the gate. A trash receptacle, drinking fountain, and street light are located immediatley around the entry for a safe experience and convenient use.

Materials

Fencing

Fencing should be of solid construction and run continuously. Refer to Table B.1 for appropriate fence heights. It is advised that fence panels be transparent at eye level so that anyone approaching the fenced area can assess if they would like to enter. Fencing layouts should consider avoiding 90 degree angles to help prevent aggressive dogs from trapping others. For high-traffic areas, a 6-foot height may be more appropriate.

Features:

- Galvanized chainlink, vinyl-coated chainlink or decorative metal material
- 9-gauge fabric with 2-inch mesh size for chainlink fences. Knuckle selvage along top.
- Bottom 24 inches of small dog fencing = max. 2-inch opening size
- No stranded wire fencing
- Fence panels with non-obstructed views through

Entry Gates

It is preferred that all entrances consist of a corral-style double gate to allow pets to be taken off-leash or put on prior to entering or leaving the fenced area. Gates should not be placed at corners or high pedestrian traffic areas as dogs may get intimated by crowds or aggressive dogs that pin them in place. Access near busy roads should also be avoided in case a dog manages to slip out and get loose. For small pocket parks, a singular gate may be more appropriate. This should be evaluated with Parks staff and users.

Features:

- Minimum 8-foot by 8-foot wide footprint with concrete pavement surfacing
- ADA minimum 32" clear gates
- 2 gates (3 if shared between small and large dog areas)
- Same height and material as the fence
- Heavy-duty hinges
- Lockable latches

Fenced Areas	Users	Facility Size			Fenced Area Size (minumum size)	Fence Height (minimum)
		Pocket	Neighborhood	Regional		
Small Dog Area	Dogs <30 lbs		x	x	2,000 SF	3 feet
Large Dog Area	Dogs >30 lbs		x	x	3/4 acre	6 feet
Optional 3rd Area	Varies			x	1/4 acre	6 feet

Table B.1 - Fenced Area Table

Image B.5 - The corral at the small dog park area for Highbridge Park. The gravel surface has eroded leaving large gaps under the fence small dogs can escape through. There is no paved access to the gates.

Maintenance Gates

Every fenced area needs a locked vehicle gate for maintenance purposes. Maintenance gates shall be located along vehicular paths of travel and where slopes are as flat as possible.

Features:

- 16-foot wide gate (Two 8-foot leaf gates)
- One-way inward swing
- Same height and material as the fence
- Heavy-duty hinges
- Lockable latches
- Bottom rail no more than 2-inches above grade

SURFACING

Layout

Spokane does not have a preferred surfacing for dog parks. There is no standard surface material for dog parks in general, but some serve as a better fit than others based on criteria such as the size of the facility, expected concentration of dogs, and install and maintenance budget. Table B.3 lists appropriate, dog-tested surface materials and provides notes on what works well and doesn't work well with each option. Table B.2 suggests which surfaces would be appropriate for each size facility based on how they would be used. The City will ultimately determine which should be used at each facility, which is recommended to be looked at on a case-by-case basis. Soil types, infiltration rates, and the presence of bedrock or other rocky conditions should all be considered when determining the best materials for a site. Some facilities may even benefit from using several types of surfaces available to add diversity to the site.

Accessibility

All walkways to and through the entry corrals shall be ADA accessible. The prefered material in these areas is concrete although asphalt and bound gravel pavements are acceptable. Bound gravel surfaces in these areas shall be compacted and treated with a bio-based soil stabilizer.

Unsuitable Materials

Extensive pavement or direct exposure to bedrock is discouraged because the surface is hard and uncomfortable on the paws of dogs. Crushed gravel is cheap and abundant but because it is angular in shape, it can hurt paws as well. Products like recycled asphalt, rubber, plastic, and other petroleum-based materials would also be discouraged because of the unhealthy exposure to carcinogens.

Natural turf has remained on the list, but it is highly recommended that it be avoided if at all possible. Because turf easily becomes degraded in a short amount of time, it is not suitable for small, intensely used spaces. Even for large sites or in areas where it can rotated out periodically, the level of maintenance required and cost of watering are cause for concern. If it is still desired, it would be better suited in a wet environment that will not require regular mowing.

Wood mulch is another material that has its limitations. Although it works well on paths and small areas as fill, it can be rather rough on the dogs if it is the primary surfacing available.

Surface Name	Pocket Facility	Neighborhood Facility	Community Facility
Natural Turf			x
Native Surface		x	x
Artificial Turf	x		
Wood Mulch		x	x
Decomposed Granite	x	x	x
Pea Gravel	x	x	x
Sand	x	x	x

Table B.2 -Appropriate surface materials based on size and cost of facilities.

Surfacing Comparison

Surface Name	Notes	Pros	Cons
Natural Turf	Ideal only for large, open spaces or where uses can be cycled or rotated.	• Comfortable for paws • Lower surface temperatures • Low install cost	• Wears easily and creates uneven surfaces • Surface becomes compacted over time • Requires frequent maintenance and replacement • Discourage use of residential streets for parking. • Requires high levels of irrigation • Requires regular mowing • Requires clearing of waste prior to mowing • High urine contents kill off turf
Native Surface	More natural, familiar look.	• Little to no irrigation needed • No install cost	• Wears easily and creates uneven surfaces • Surface becomes compacted over time • Harder to keep dogs from getting dirty • Complex native planting replacement
Artificial Turf	Costly, but provides a uniform look for a long period of time. Requires drainage layer.	• Works well on mounds and steeper grade changes • Surfacing ADA compliant • Dog waste visible for easy disposal • Comfortable for paws • Well draining surface • Great for high traffic areas	• High initial cost • Requires irrigation to clean off surface • Specialized maintenance experience needed
Wood Mulch	Simple to replace frequently. To be laid at least 6 inches thick.	• Simple installation • Low replacement cost	• Somewhat uncomfortable for paws • Surfacing not always ADA compliant • Dog waste easily hidden • Retains strong urine smell • Frequent replacement needed
Decomposed Granite	Compacted surface that is easy to traverse on. To be laid at least 4 inches thick.	• Simple installation • Surfacing ADA compliant • Dog waste visible for easy disposal • Great for high traffic areas	• Higher surface temperatures • Moderate replacement cost • Generates dusty conditions • Retains strong urine smell • Frequent replacement needed
Pea Gravel	Uniform look. To be laid at least 4 inches thick.	• Simple installation • Well draining surface	• Higher surface temperatures • Surfacing not ADA compliant • Frequent replacement needed
Course Sand	Uniform look. To be laid at least 6 inches thick.	• Simple installation • Comfortable for paws	• Surfacing not ADA compliant • Dog waste easily hidden

Table B.3 - Comparison of various dog park surfacing materials.

AMENITIES & FURNISHINGS

Water Sources

Drinking Fountains

One of the biggest concerns of dog owners is keeping their dogs hydrated. At least one combination human + dog fountain is preferred at the entry corral of the dog park. Providing a fountain model with tippable dog bowls simplifies the cleaning process. Static dog bowls develop scummy water that can transmit diseases such as giardia between dogs.

Hose Bibb

Being able to tap into the water source can be very helpful to provide a quick means of spraying down surfaces such as the pavement under shelters and in the corral areas. If the park chooses, they could also leave the hose attached so that visitors can spray down their dogs after a messy play session or allow them to fill their own dog bowls.

Image B.6 - Sources of water help keep dogs hydrated and allow for rinsing off after a long day of play.

Washing Facilities

Although not required, having a formal facility for spraying down dogs could be beneficial; especially for locations with native surfacing which may become muddy. This may be a feature that individual dog park committees spearhead down the road if the demand is there.

Splash Pools

Much like the washing facilities, splash pools or pads can be seen as a luxury item and would in no ways be required at any location. In fact, a willing committee would need to take charge on maintaining the feature so that disease would not overtake the water. Special provisions would need to be made to make sure it is a safe feature for dogs and young children. If installed properly, this could be an asset that draws in visitors from afar. Many respondents from the survey recommended that these be included in the design as dogs seem to enjoy engaging with then. Splash pools would be best suited in high intensity areas where they would get a lot of use.

Shade Sources

Trees

Shade is one of the most highly desired features for dog parks, and the easiest way to accommodate this is by locating a dog park in an area with already existing, dense tree canopies. A site with too much shade may not be able to dry as fast as needed and could inhibit turf growth, so finding a balance between shade and open space is important. Trees can also be added over time, although it is important to note that young trees may be more likely to get disturbed and stressed during the early years of establishment unless they are properly protected.

Shade Structures

Shade structures not only provide a stable source of shade, but create a landmark where humans can gather. Structures can protect people from the elements as well. It is recommended that each fenced area have at least one source of shade, and this would provide an instant solution to sites without trees in particular.

Furnishings

Dog Waste and Trash Receptacles

All entrances and gathering areas should have waste receptacles accessible to users. Trash receptacles should have tamper-proof lids to keep out wildlife. Receptacles should also be close to maintenance routes in order to improve the efficiency of clearing them out.

Bag Holders

Specific dog waste bag holders can be purchased, or a holder can be manufactured and attached to the fence or shelter structure. It is recommended that these are located near entrances and gathering spaces at a minimum. Specialty bags can also be purchased for the holders, or owners can provide their own. and leave extras around for others.

Benches

Every fenced area should provide at least 1 bench. Seating should at a minimum be located at accessible locations such

as shelters or entrances, although more can be provided across the site as seen fit. Because food is discouraged in dog parks, picnic tables are not recommended.

Agility Equipment

Equipment can vary from pre-manufactured, specialized equipment designed specifically for dog parks, or natural elements such as logs and boulders. For more natural materials not traditionally regulated, care should be taken to make sure no sharp objects are protruding. Materials need to be durable enough to hold up to years of use. Equipment that is easily to clean off is encouraged in order to easily keep sanitized.

Signage

Community Bulletin Board

Bulletin boards should be posted at all Neighborhood and Community facilities. A centralized public location to post about upcoming events, missing pets, and other information pertinent to what's important for citizens could be seen as very important to owners, espcially to those who do not regularly have access to the information on the internet.

Codes of Conduct and Rules

All locations need some sort of standard signage posted that clearly states the rules of each City facility. This may include both general park rules and specific dog park rules.

Requirements for Entry

The City should work with local animal shelters and veterinarians to establish an adequate list of requirements. Requirements could include minimum age of dogs allowed, vaccinations needed, and mandatory licensure of all pets.

Hours

Most commonly seen from dawn to dusk. Hours could be adapted as seen fit; especially during off-seasons when sunlight is limited.

Wayfinding

Depending on the visibility of the location, signage may be needed to point visitors in the right location to the fenced area(s) and prominently display the name of the dog park.

Restrooms

Most jurisdictions do not consider the addition of restrooms while planning for dog park amenities, mainly because they are not seen as a necessary dog park element. There are no standard distances from restrooms to dog parks either. Based on survey results, citizens of Spokane have some concerns about access and proximity to facilities. Most eligible Neighborhood and Community sites are parks that already have restrooms on site, so as long as citizens feel the proximity away is not too far, there should not need to be any actions taken. For Community Dog Parks that do not have restrooms, the city can assess if adding them in would be beneficial. Especially considering that people may be traveling longer distances. Restrooms should not be located inside the fenced areas in order to provide access to all visitors. A centralized location near the entrance would be preferred.

PART 3

OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES

REGULATIONS

A great deal of planning is required to help a good dog park run. In reality, it takes more than the Parks Department to operate a dog park. Local shelters, designated dog park committees and even individual residents can make a large impact on how a dog park functions.

Dog Park Rules

The High Bridge Dog Park includes City of Spokane Park Use Rules, but there are no dog park-specific rules included. If the City would like to adopt official dog park rules that can be universally used at all locations, it is encouraged that they collaborate with local animal shelters and veteranarians to establish an appropriate, complete list of rules.

Rules may include not allowing dogs younger than 4 months or those in heat, requiring up-to-date vaccinations, and setting maximum occupancy. The rules may also include a list of unacceptable behaviors amongst the dogs and their owners, which would lead to them being reprimanded.

Enforcement

In order to keep dog parks a safe, enjoyable place to come back to, patrons need to have a favorable experience. Unfortunately, a trip can potentially turn sour when someone decides to use facilities inappropriately or fail to care for their pets. A system of enforcement should be in place to help control unwanted behavior.

One way to help enforce dog parks is by establishing a city-paid position. These park rangers or monitors would manage both dog park activity and dog activity in other parks that do not allow for off-leash activity.

There are other ways to be proactive about curbing undesirable behavior. Many municipalities charge a fee and control who enters the facility. The following options could be considered:

- Required permits (included with pet licensure)
- Key fob or key code entry
- Entry fees and annual passes
- Specific operation hours (typically dawn to dusk)

CITY MAINTENANCE

Minimum Maintenance Requirements

Routine Maintenance (2-3 Times/Week)

The following is a recommended list of items that should be monitored on a weekly basis. A designated crew would need to be established in order to provide consistent, year-round care.

- Clean up debris such as broken branches on the ground.
- Empty waste containers and restock bag dispensers.
- Sanitze any water bowls on site.
- Sweep or spray down hardscape surfaces. Shovel snow off paved surfaces in winter.
- Spray down furnishings such as agility equipment with water to clean off dirt and reduce the chances of disease lingering on the surfaces.
- Inspect furniture and fence integrity. Inspect site for tampering or vandalism. Note repairs that need to be made if conditions are unsafe, and assess if they need to be made immediately or not.
- Check for leaks at water features. Turn off any water left on.
- Mow turf areas as needed.
- Hand water the landscape and remove weeds as needed.
- Notify authorities of active undesired behavior.

Seasonal Maintenance (Once a Year)

The following items do not require constant monitoring or replacement, but should be addressed at least once a year, or as needed. This may be done by the designated dog park staff or other Parks staff that is available.

- Replenish surfacing material to adequate depth
- Repair sod in worn areas.
- Fill in any low spots in the terrain that may be pooling water on the surface.
- Repair any furnishings that have yet to be repaired
- Analyze irrigation system for any inefficiencies
- Shut off irrigation and other water sources such as drinking fountains and hoses in the off-season in order to reduce the chance of damage to the pipes.

In natural turf areas, there may need to be a certain period of time alloted where a fenced area is not in use. This way seed or sod can be added to troubled spots and have time to establish before coming into contact with dogs again. For parks that have a third fenced area, the dogs that would normally frequent the closed fence area could easily relocate. In the case that that is not an option, the City could consider either combining large and small dogs together, or suggest that the displaced dogs visit a different dog park for the time being.

Image C.1 - Panorama view of the dog park at High Bridge shows off the expanse of large open space and variation amongst surfacing types.

COMMUNITY MAINTENANCE

Designated Dog Park Committees

Expectations

There is high value in having a designated dog park committee for each individual dog park. An established organization can help tremendously with day-to-day operations. Being a member of an organization brings with it a sense of pride and comaraderie, and a strong desire to make a difference in one's neighborhood.

Since the Parks department does not have the resources to finely monitor the use of dog parks, a designated committee can more freely address situations as they come up. The committee may also be more in-tune with specific features and nuances of a site, and can tailor their means of operation and management to better fit how the community thinks.

The following list of items would be more appropriate for the committees to manage:

- Ensure a dog park gets used and not sit dormant
- Inform frequent users about disease outbreak
- Coordinate volunteer events
- Coordinate special events such as designated dog breed meet up days
- Provide any park updates on a designated website or social media page

Volunteer Efforts

Expectations

Even with an appointed maintenance crew and dog park committee, there may be times when a little more help is needed to keep a dog park running. Many community members would be open to volunteering their time on occasion if it meant the aesthetics and operations of the park would be boosted.

- Add additional landscaping to beautify the site
- Rally to construct a shelter
- Raise funds to add site amenities
- Sponsor events to draw in more patrons
- Education programs about dog etiquette

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