



TO: Houston Parks and Recreation Department

DATE: 4/28/2010

SUBJECT: New dog park location recommendation

HDPAA is increasingly aware of an area covering largely middle to upper class communities in far northwest Houston that feels left out of the "joy of dog park benefits" because the nearest dog park to them is more than a 30 minute drive. This is the quadrant bounded by Beltway 8 (Sam Houston Tollway) and 290 to the south, and 249 (Tomball Pkwy) to the East.

Our organization has pin-pointed 2 suggested locations for a dog park that could meet the needs of these dog owners in far NW Houston communities that want to be able to go to a dog park every day with their faithful best friends. HDPAA has also identified an area that contains a fair amount of unused green space in this quadrant. We suspect you might have City property available for dog park use there. These 3 locations are identified and described in the map shown on this page: <http://www.houstondogpark.org/nw-houston-north-dog%20-park.htm>

The following additional recommendations are being made by HDPAA for a far NW area dog park:

HDPAA proposes a far NW area dog park that sacrifices amenities for area/size. There are several reasons why HDPAA would recommend the next City dog park be over 5 acres. A large dog park experiences less erosion and avoids problems common to over use of small dog parks. A larger dog park can actually require less maintenance than small ones over time for this very reason. A large dog park will allow distribution of use areas and provide room to implement pathways to direct foot traffic so that grass can grow in the dog park. Grass in a dog park helps prevent erosion and is safer and more environmentally friendly than a mulch ground cover. It is also softer on our dog's feet than mulch is.

At minimum 5 acres is needed for the expected usage at a far NW area dog park, and 10 to 15 acres would be ideal. HDPAA expects to see the park have well over 100 visitors per day on fair weathered spring and fall weekends, with up to 50 dogs and handlers in the park at one time being the average through the year. This amount of patrons requires a certain amount of space to prevent dog aggression that is often increased in the close quarters of smaller dog parks.

An additional reason we recommend the City build a dog park over 5 acres is purely for the positive recognition the City would receive. Larger dog parks are truly much more appreciated and utilized by dog lovers.

HDPAA has already identified local sponsors/donors who are eager to supply amenities such as Dogipot bag stations, trash cans, benches, and shade structures, now and in the future. HDPAA has already received approximately \$1000 in donations from the community to be used specifically to help build a far NW area dog park. HDPAA can also raise future funds to improve the park by holding dog friendly events at the park. HDPAA asks that the City of Houston provide the land and the fence (and a parking lot if one does not exist). If needed, HDPAA proposes to have volunteers keep the park clean, refill the dogipot baggie stations and even empty the trash cans inside the park if a dumpster can be provided.

HDPAA contends that a dry or wet bottom detention area would be an ideal place to put a dog park and there are many in the mapped area that are not being utilized. It is a fact that Harris County Precinct 3 has built 2 dog parks in flood reservoirs. These dog parks simply close for a few days to weeks when they are flooded several times per year. We propose the same could be done in a large detention area in far NW Houston. We have also determined safe solutions to cover the large drain pipes in detention areas to prevent dogs from entering them and being harmed. Thank you for considering our proposal.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Moore
President
Houston Dog Park Association