



Legislation Text

File #: 42700, **Version:** 1

Fiscal Note

This resolution authorizes a pilot program to expand the “Dogs in Parks” policy to additional parks as indicated below. No significant fiscal impact is anticipated from this pilot program. The Parks Division anticipates a marginal increase in dog park permit revenue and from additional dog licenses issued by the Clerk’s Office. Funds required for ranger staff providing additional enforcement and education will be absorbed within the Parks Division’s 2016 Adopted Operating Budget.

Title

Extending the authorization of a pilot program to expand the dogs in parks policy to include additional locations where dogs are allowed within designated parks as authorized by Madison General Ordinances 8.19 (1)(a)(3).

Body

WHEREAS, Madison Parks recognizes that as dog ownership has increased and the roles of dogs in the lives of residents has changed, there is a need to evaluate the existing policies related to dogs in parks; and

WHEREAS, Dog walking in parks is currently regulated extensively, with very few opportunities to legally take a dog on a walk in a park; and

WHEREAS, Dog walking provides individual health benefits as it keeps dog owners more active and also provides community building opportunities as it connects people who share a common interest; and

WHEREAS, Madison Parks strives to have the park system used extensively, both to promote the health of our community through positive activities, as well as to discourage negative behaviors on public land; and

WHEREAS, the Park Commission and Long Range Planning Subcommittee will be considering policy modifications regarding dogs in parks as well as off-leash dog park exercise areas and establishing standards for locating these amenities over the coming year; and

WHEREAS, Madison Parks is interested in evaluating on a modest scale the impact of operating under a policy related to dogs in parks that provides access, focuses on education of dog owners, and establishes accountability for owners to obey the reasonable rules established; and

WHEREAS, Madison Parks staff established a process to evaluate parks that could be included in a pilot program that would be effective until April 15, 2016 and could be used to inform future policy decisions on this issue; and

WHEREAS, the pilot program would authorize dogs on leash in designated areas (on paved trails, or within six feet of them) of specified parks, so long as they are licensed and permitted as stated in MGO 8.19(1)(a)(3); and

WHEREAS, Madison Parks has conducted a survey of neighbors and residents to determine if there is interest in this pilot program and whether or not it was supported; and

WHEREAS, with 754 responses as of July 1st, 84% overall supported the original pilot program; and

WHEREAS, in all 13 locations the survey results were supportive of the policy with results ranging from support of 75% up to 100% of respondents; and

WHEREAS, in all 13 locations the dogs on leash pilot program has been well received and there is support to continue and potentially expand the pilot program to include additional parks where dogs on leash are allowed.

WHEREAS, the Parks Division is working closely with the Parks Long Range Planning Subcommittee on developing recommendations for dog policies for the City; and

WHEREAS, for the existing pilot project parks as well as any additional pilot locations the Parks Division will gather community input and provide a written report on the outcomes of the pilot program to the Parks Commission by March 31, 2017.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the following parks be included in a dogs in parks pilot study program administered by the Parks Division and in effect until December 31, 2016.

Acewood Park
Baxter Park
Blackhawk Park
Door Creek Park
Garner Park
Greentree Park
High Point Park
James Madison Park
Norman Clayton Park
North Star Park
Richmond Hill Park
Walnut Grove Park
Wingra Park

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Common Council authorizes the Parks Commission to approve additional parks to be included in a dogs in parks pilot study program administered by the Parks Division and in effect until December 31, 2016.