



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 39163, **Version:** 1

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### Fiscal Note

No significant fiscal impact is anticipated from this pilot program. Ranger staff providing additional enforcement and education will be reallocated within the Parks Division's budget. There may be a marginal increase in dog park permit revenue and additional dog licenses issued by the Clerk's Office from this program, as it will create more contacts with dog owners by City staff.

### Title

Authorizing 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 1<sup>st</sup>, 84% overall supported the 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.

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 April 15, 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