



DOG PARK 1 - RIVERSEDGE

To : Principals MES, MMS and AMS

From: Paws 4 Medford – Jim Silva & Gary DeStefano

Subject: Riverbend Park - Information

Date: May 26, 2016



Medford Off-Leash Recreation Area

Program and Goals:

- Create a new Off-Leash Recreation Area
- Separate large dog and small dog areas
- Shade structure and/or trees for shade
- Meet ADA accessibility requirements
- Lighting for evening use
- Water supply for dog fountain and irrigation system
- Drainage system to meet City and State regulations
- Design elements compatible with adjacent wetlands and flood plain





Medford Off-Leash Recreation Area

**Project
Location/
Area Map**



Medford Off-Leash Recreation Area



Views of Existing Site

Paws4medford.org

www.paws4medford.org

(339) 674-0085



Medford Off-Leash Recreation Area

Large Dog Area



Medford Off-Leash Recreation Area

Small Dog Area





2014
<p><u>November 3, 2014</u> Establish Group Website, Facebook, Twitter</p> <p><u>November 7, 2014</u> Group meets at Riverbend Park with DP Architect</p> <p><u>November 8, 2014</u> Article appears in Medford Newspaper.</p> <p><u>November 19, 2014</u> Group meets with Mayor McGlynn with our Proposal. Mayor accepts a meeting with our DP Architect</p> <p><u>December 3, 2014</u> Paws4Medford participates in the Jingle Bell Tree Lighting event</p> <p><u>December 17, 2014</u> Paws Group Meets with the Mayor McGlynn, Procurement officer, Medford City Solicitor and the DP Architect, Mr. Andrew Leonard</p>
2015
<p><u>January 2015</u> Article appears in Boston Globe Northwest Edition</p> <p><u>January 22, 2015</u> Patty Flynn & Jim Silva along with DP Architect , Andrew Leonard survey Other City Parks Including: Carr, Victory, Playstead, Dugger, Tufts, Columbus and Morrison.</p> <p><u>March 2015</u> Riverbend Park site selected</p> <p><u>April 20, 2015</u> Publish on the Medford.org website asking for community input</p> <p><u>October 19, 2015</u> Presented to School Committee based on proximity to Schools – APPROVED</p> <p><u>Fall/Winter 2016</u> Grant Application</p>
2016
<p><u>January 21, 2016:</u> Meeting Paws, Alicia Hunt & Mayor Burke Design Development overview/Funding /Completed documents /Final Approvals</p> <p><u>Feb/Mar 2016:</u> Construction Documentation</p> <p><u>May 2016</u> – City Council</p> <p><u>Spring/Summer 2016:</u> Bidding and Construction</p> <p><u>2016: Park Completed</u></p>

DRAFT – Off Leash Recreational Area - Riverbend



What to know before you enter:

- The OLRA is for dogs, their handlers and those accompanying them. No other use is allowed.
- All Dogs are on leash to and from the Parking Area's
- All dogs must be licensed, vaccinated and healthy (no contagious diseases or parasites).
- Dogs showing aggression toward people or other dogs are not allowed in the OLRA.
- Dogs must be at least 4 months old to enter the OLRA.
- Dogs in heat are not allowed in the OLRA.
- Prong and choke collars must be removed upon entering the OLRA.
- Dogs must be leashed when entering or exiting the OLRA.
- No more than two dogs per handler may enter the OLRA.
- Handlers must be 16 years of age or older.
- Handlers are responsible for any injuries or damage caused by the dog(s) under their control.

While you are in the OLRA:

- Dogs must be in view and under the control of their handler at all times.
- Dogs must be removed from the OLRA at the first sign of aggression.
- Handlers must pick up and dispose of their dog's waste immediately and should encourage others to do the same. The pooper-scooper bylaw is in effect at the OLRA.
- Digging is not permitted. Handlers must fill any holes dug by dogs under their control.
- Children under 16 years of age must be accompanied by an adult.
- The OLRA is not a play space for children. Children should not run around or yell – this can trigger a dog's natural chasing response.

Paws4medford.org

www.paws4medford.org

(339) 674-0085

- Handlers must have possession of the dog's leash(es) at all times.
- No food and no smoking are allowed in the OLRA.
- Training treats are allowed, but dog food is NOT allowed.
- All incidents, injuries or inappropriate conduct by dogs or people should be reported to Medford Parks Department. The City of Medford may ban individual dogs or people from the OLRA facility at any time for any reason.
- Please remember to use good off-leash recreation area etiquette when using the Riverbend Park facility.
- Be respectful of other OLRA and park users!



Community Support Informal groups, petitions, and 501C-3 non-profit groups promoting dog parks in your community can generate interest to successfully work within the system to create and support local dog parks. However, overzealous or disorganized groups can also quickly sink a well-engineered plan for a dog park. Groups must learn to work with local agencies, instead of trying to always fight them, in order to be successful. Donations of labor, materials or funding will make officials more cooperative.

Volunteer Groups Volunteers can be a tremendous asset to the dog park to help stretch already strained maintenance budgets. Projects that volunteers can participate in can include raking leaves, spreading surfacing material, installing or repairing fencing, installing agility and exercise equipment, brush clearing and more. Advance sign-ups are critical so that volunteers commit to specific times, and helps ensure volunteers actually show up when expected! Volunteer groups can be expected to self-police the area for trash, dog waste, and to replace pickup bags in the dispensers.

Know the Users Selling the concept to a reluctant community can be a challenge. However your dog park will serve a wide variety of residents. There are nearly 73 million dogs in the US and 59% of the households have at least one dog. Most park facilities are currently geared towards a narrow range of users such as ages 2 to 12 for playgrounds, or ages 12 to 35 for most ball fields. Dog parks are one of the few multi-generational park activities, that offer recreation for almost every age and ability level. Based on the number of park users and initial cost, a dog park provides more recreation opportunities per dollar spent on construction and maintenance than any other park activity.

Paws4medford.org

www.paws4medford.org

(339) 674-0085

Choosing a Location As in real estate, a good location is a key to success. While neighbor' concerns are sometimes over-exaggerated, they still need to be addressed. There may be concerned about barking, loose dogs, smells and inadequate parking. All of these issues can be resolved. Once established however, a nearby dog park becomes a huge recreational asset to the families nearby as well as the entire community, sometimes even increasing property values. Be sure to avoid locating dog parks adjacent to schools or playgrounds, to reduce potential conflicts with children! Fortunately, dog parks do not always require prime property, and many great dog parks have been located on top of old garbage dumps, power line right-of-ways and along freeway sound walls—areas which may not have been valued for other uses.



Allow Adequate Space One of the biggest mistakes can be not allocating enough space for off-leash use. The popularity of most dog parks may require a minimum area of 1/2 an acre or more, although many smaller urban dog parks are also very successful.. Many successful dog parks however have been created by re-purposing existing hockey rinks, ball fields, lawn bowling or tennis courts, or equestrian arenas, even if it is just temporary or seasonal. Overgrown, neglected and unmanaged areas can become great dog parks. Inadequate parking can be a big problem especially on weekends, so even unpaved overflow parking spaces should be considered.

Overcoming Legalities—Some communities today still have archaic ordinances forbidding pets to be off-leash in *any* public areas. This means that city government may first need to amend local laws to allow your do park to exist. Instead of attempting to amend your community' whole dog ordinance, consider requesting a special use exemption. A temporary use authorization may help to at least get your park established, and no elected official will jeopardize his career by later attempting to close a popular dog park.

Professional Design Assistance Consider using the talents of an experienced Dog Park Consultant or Landscape Architecture firm to help plan your dog park. They know how to best utilize a space, taking into consideration weather, access, utilities, drainage, vegetation, visibility, parking, and other factors. They are also very experienced at presenting plans to the community and to public officials, and can act as an important third party advocate for the park. The book *How to Build a Dog Park* by Susan Stecchi, can be an invaluable resource.

Paws4medford.org

www.paws4medford.org

(339) 674-0085

Fencing—Good fences make good dog parks. Fences should be five feet or higher and be absolutely escape proof. It is smart to bury several inches of the fence beneath the surface, since some dogs have an ability to find any possible weakness in the



confinement. Multiple entries into the park will help reduce worn areas. It is very important to have self-closing double gates with a transition space between the gates, to reduce the possibility of dogs escaping unexpectedly from the fenced off-leash area. Closely spaced wood slats in the fence between adjacent dog park sections will reduce visibility between sections to eliminate dogs from fence fighting. Don't use narrow openings at the entrance which may prohibit wheelchairs or strollers from entering the park. Avoid creating any 90 degree corners in your fence system which can be used by aggressive dogs to trap unwilling victim dogs. Don't forget to include a large maintenance entrance for large equipment like mowers. Longer, linear parks are better for playing fetch with sticks or balls. Create smaller areas for small or shy dogs. Typical installed costs are about \$25-\$30/linear foot for heavy duty chain link fencing, high, with gates and accessories.

Water Drinking fountains are absolutely essential in any dog park for the health of both dogs and people after exercising. Without drinking fountains, users may be forced to bring buckets of standing water, which can be unsanitary, can spread disease to other dogs, or can create mosquito havens. Consider water spray features or dog wash stations, but ensure you have provided proper drainage. Mud quickly becomes a huge problem in dog parks. Irrigation systems can help maintain turf grass in any climate, and reduces smells from urine especially in arid climates. Consider two adjacent drains to prevent flooding of one drain gets clogged with dog hair.

Exercise Equipment Without exercise equipment for dogs, your park is much like a park without a children' playground. You would have just a fenced area. Exercise components are for people to exercise in a non-competitive environment |with their dogs! Choose components that offer a variety of activities like ramps, tunnels, jumps and weave poles to accommodate the many different skill levels of both the dogs and their owners. Equipment can be in its own area, or be an integral part of the main play area. Arrange components apart from each other, and do not install components in a circle, but arrange them in an evenly spaced but random fashion which allows users to create a different course each time they visit the park. These activities make your dog park more of a destination and will increase the time users stay at the park. Because dog urine is highly corrosive, activities need to be made from rustproof materials like aluminum, galvanized steel, plastic or stainless steel. All hardware should be stainless steel and avoid any products

Paws4medford.org

www.paws4medford.org

(339) 674-0085

made from brittle PVC pipe or lumber. Public parks are also vandalism prone, so choose heavy duty materials that have been created specifically for public dog parks. While not intended for children, unsupervised children sometimes play on dog park equipment, so it needs to be extremely durable and safe. For the safety of dogs and park users, immediately remove any unauthorized equipment. Injuries caused by unauthorized but condoned equipment quickly can lead to expensive lawsuits.



Park Furniture Dog parks help build strong community and social ties and are fantastic places to meet neighbors and other interesting dog owners. Consider arranging your benches in an L or U shape to encourage conversations. Tables with a single center post will avoid the effects of dog urine. Locate benches away from congested entrance areas to better distribute the use through the park. Aluminum frames are more resistant to corrosion from dog urine. Allow at least a clear runway along the fence for unimpeded access for dogs to run the fence line. Climbing areas like mounds, hills and contours can add interest but can also become erosion problems. Large boulders can create mountains for dogs to play of the Hill

Accessibility for All Off-leash areas should have a wide gates and accessible surfacing materials to allow wheelchair and stroller access. Besides paved surfaces, other materials such as rubber matting and certified engineered wood fiber are considered to be ADA accessible, so there are no barriers into or through the dog park..

User Control Since many communities restrict use to their residents only or to those with passes, some form of easy to monitor control system should be used. Dog tags, parking passes, card swipes, electronic pay stations, and radio frequency ID(RFID) tags have all been used successfully to help monitor users. In some cases user fees are charged, but those fees should only be used for dog park maintenance and improvements, instead of going into the city' general funds.

Sanitation Pickup stations and receptacles are absolutely critical for a clean facility. Stations should dispense individual bags stapled to a card instead of on a roll, since kids will take the rolled bags and stream your whole roll of expensive biodegradable bags across the park. Receptacles can be located on the outside of the fences to make trash pickup easier for maintenance staff. Several small receptacles will make unloading easier than large receptacles. Consider signs and/or color coding your receptacles for specific uses like Trash Only or Dog Waste Only.

Paws4medford.org

www.paws4medford.org

(339) 674-0085

Lighting Timed lighting helps to extend the hours of use, but consider using the services of a sports lighting design specialist to avoid spill lighting into the neighborhood.



Restroom Facilities While dogs are not too particular about where they go, their owners will expect some sort of facilities at the dog park, even if it is just a portable toilet. This becomes critical at larger destination parks. Video cameras on the building (even fake ones, or just signs that say video cameras are being used) can greatly help to reduce vandalism in your park. The presence of dogs in parks generally greatly reduces vandalism, despite creating much higher park usage.

Surfacing While grass is ideal, it will become worn out by enthusiastic canines. Consider reinforcing continually worn out areas with asphalt, concrete, crushed rock, decomposed granite, artificial turf, tanbark, hog fuel, rubberized grid, or a certified engineered wood fiber such as what is approved for children' playgrounds. Wood fiber interlocks together to stay in place far better than ordinary chips, and will be wheelchair accessible while eliminating the mud problem. Depth should be 3–6, but never use a Geotextile or landscape fabric since digging dogs will soon be tearing it up, and dragging it throughout the park. Since excited dogs can quickly destroy the grass adjacent to the fence line, consider creating a gravel perimeter track, and only try to maintain the turf grass in the middle of the park.

Shade –Shade shelters or gazebos are highly recommended to help shield users from rain, UV rays, hot sun, even in the northern climates. Fabric shade shelters are quite inexpensive and may not even require a building permit. However, the fabric roof needs to be removed seasonally in locations where snow is likely. Larger hard–roofed park shelters are a more permanent solution, and can become an important gathering and social focal point in your park.

Signage Good signage can be an effective user education tool, and bad signage will be completely ignored. Signs should have friendly and colorful graphics, and the text should take a positive tone instead of a long list of Rules. Keep the rules as brief as possible and provide a phone number to contact parks staff in case there is a maintenance, or other problem at the park. Use materials like fiberglass and Lexan that are easily cleaned of spray paint or markers, since any flat surface can become a graffiti target. Fast removal sends a signal to vandals that graffiti is not tolerated in the community, and shows park users that you care about the park. Park users will tend to self–maintain the park more when they think the park operators care.

Paws4medford.org

www.paws4medford.org

(339) 674-0085

NOTES:

