

To: Denver Parks and Recreation

cc: Everybody you know

Please **do not** place an Off-Leash Park within City Park. Please **do** consider collaborating with responsible dog owners to establish a modern, well-designed Off-Leash Park with effective regulations in an appropriate location for neighborhoods affected by the closure of the temporary park at Colfax & Josephine.

Some issues with placing an Off-Leash Park within City Park include:

- Dogs are already allowed in City Park, and throughout all parks, under leash. According to experts, dog parks are a supplement to a dog's daily activity, and should not be the sole source of exercise or socialization. That is, dog parks are amenities, not necessities.
- Enforcement of leash laws in Denver parks is spotty at best. Placing an off-leash area in City Park does not inspire confidence that enforcement will improve:

It may be expected that additional dog owners will drive to City Park from other areas, park in the Pavilion lot, and simply let their dogs loose from their cars.

Off-leash dogs are a threat and a nuisance to runners, elderly, and children. Attracting more dogs to City Park will increase this problem in City Park. Will citizens be allowed to mace dogs that chase them in the park?

Off-leash dogs can be expected to chase and potentially kill geese and other wildlife in City Park.

- Providing a "world class" off-leash area in City Park would entail:
 - fencing the off-leash area from all other park areas
 - direct, parking lot access to the off-leash area
 - "air lock" entrance for dogs to become acclimated to the park's surroundings
 - dog washing station with a hose and spray wand to clean pets before leaving the park
 - Inside the off-leash area water for bowls and free dog waste collection bags and receptacles

Any consideration of policy to place Off-Leash Parks within established parks needs to address:

- Reduced public access to the affected park, since an Off-Leash Area is an amenity for dog owners' use.
- Dog leash policy review.
- Membership/use fees for Off-Leash Park users, similar to Recreation Center use fees.
- Enforcement plan.
- Pollution and clean-up assessment and plan.
- Fencing, parking, and other means to ensure that dogs are separated from other park areas.

We encourage review of the following for more information on Off-Leash Parks done well:

[Bainbridge Island, Washington, Dog Parks](#)

[15 things humans do wrong at dog parks](#)
[Dog Owners Group for Park Access in Washington](#)

We would be pleased to have representatives participate in planning for a new Off-Leash Park.

Sincerely,

whoever signs this letter