

Pilot Off Leash Program

Community Comments

From: Hugh Brown [mailto:hugh.m.brown2@gmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2015 4:52 PM

To: Metz, Cathy

Subject: Comment on off-leash at Jenkins Ranch Park

Hi Cathy,

I saw that Parks and Rec are considering allowing off-leash dogs at Jenkins Ranch Park. We live nearby and often walk our small dog on-leash along the sidewalks on Jenkins Ranch Rd, including past the park. I'd like to register our concerns and opposition as follows.

- The open area in JRP is unfenced. This is a significant difference from the Smelter dog park, where the river and mountain limit the access of off-leash dogs to other walkers and dogs on-leash. While many dogs can be under good voice control or are more fixated on the Frisbee than anything else, other dogs will certainly leave the JRP space when they see a nearby passing dog on leash. Even a friendly large dog easily overwhelms our (and others') small on-leash dogs, knocking them over and eliciting a dangerous defensive reaction from the small dog. More aggressive large dogs are much more dangerous.

- A walker with a dog on-leash cannot get away from a larger off-leash dog that is under poor voice control. What is the walker supposed to do as we drag our small dog away and the large un-leashed dog follows unfettered?

- I'm not at all comfortable with the proximity of the off-leash area to the children's play area at JRP. I guarantee that small children will get at least intimidated or hurt, perhaps not often but once is too much for a city park. In fact, some children will innocently approach free dogs with unpredictable results. What are their parent(s) supposed to do to prevent a tragedy when a dog is off-leash and their owners are 100 yards away?

- I'm sure your remember an incident some time ago when an illegally off-leash dog attacked an older man on the ART with the owner nearby. I don't know the circumstances beyond what was published in the Herald but it shows the potential for problems with off-leash dogs. He had to go the Mercy, as I remember.

- So, an unfenced off-leash area in JRP will create a no-go zone for peaceful walkers with on-leash dogs and for at least some parents looking for a safe place for their children to play in a city park. We have a good dog park. It's huge and safe. Let's keep the rest of Durango Parks on-leash only.

Thanks, Hugh Brown

From: Korb, Julie [mailto:KORB_J@fortlewis.edu]

Sent: Monday, April 06, 2015 9:28 PM

To: Rec

Cc: Korb, Julie; David Kirk

Subject: pilot off leash program

I strongly urge you to reconsider the pilot off leash program at Jenkins Ranch. The open field at Jenkins Ranch currently is used by numerous children who live in the neighborhood and by making this park an off leash park it will bring in numerous dog owners from outside the neighborhood resulting in children/dog conflicts. In addition, the fields would end up having more dog feces than it already does from owners not picking up after their dogs. It seems that a park that isn't in such a large neighborhood with lots of children would be a better option for an off leash park. These field are also often used for soccer, lacrosse, baseball, football games for children, young adults and adults. Having dogs running free and sport activities do not go hand in hand.

Julie Korb

Julie E. Korb, Ph.D.

Professor

Fort Lewis College

Biology Department

1000 Rim Drive

Durango Colorado 81301

korb_j@fortlewis.edu

970 382-6905

From: d r [mailto:dgopottery@yahoo.com]

Sent: Monday, April 06, 2015 3:30 PM

To: Rec

Subject: Off Leash Programun

This is a topic to which we have a vested interest. When Durango used taxes to build the dog park, we were really hopeful that it would alleviate an ongoing problem in the town district east of East 3rd Avenue. The problem is that people in this neighborhood do not think the "leash your dog law" applies to them. They are the entitled. There are numerous problems with unleashed dogs on the college trail. After the dog attacks, the owner is very apologeticbut the next day or so their dog is

unleashed at the bottom of the hill to run freely up the hill. This also allows them not to know where their dogs have pooped...so they do not need to pick it up. The deer give their dogs a time to chase so they get good exercise. The city so far has been unwilling or unable to do anything about this. What would lead us to believe that there would be any way to (dare I say police) these new areas? While walking my dog, we were attacked from behind by an unleashed dog. They knock me over, but luckily, I landed in a snow pile. There are always little kids at Park. We love dogs, but children are by far a priority for safety. Why would you want to open up another area when you can't even manage the areas that exist. The dog park has not helped, and we do not feel more dog parks are the answer...at least in the historical district. Dog owners need to take responsibility. And how can you get them to do that? Who knows.

Gordon & Donna Rowe
823 E. 7th Avenue
Durango, CO 81301

From: wardmaggie@mydurango.net [mailto:wardmaggie@mydurango.net]

Sent: Monday, April 06, 2015 1:53 PM

To: Rec

Subject: Dog Park

My name is Margaret Olson, and I live at 408 Hillcrest drive. I have an unfenced backyard on the hill west of the park. PLEASE KEEP IN MIND, that hill area and our neighborhoods are full of wildlife. Sometimes there are too many deer to count. The neighborhood is full of resident dogs as it is, the neighborhood kids play in that park. What about parking? Will Jenkins Ranch road be filled now with cars? All summer, the tennis court is in use. Where will these folks park? It will be a mess if this goes forward. Please do not allow a dog park at the Jenkins Ranch Park. Mr. Jenkins, who lives at the south end of the park has already posted NO DOGS allowed on his vacant lot. Sincerely, Margaret Olson

Sent: Wednesday, April 08, 2015 1:36 PM

To: Rec

Subject: Off Leash area at Jenkins Ranch Park

I am concerned about this proposal. The survey was biased. Below are comments that I couldn't express in the survey.

If a fence is put in for the dog park, it will interfere with playing ball and sledding in the grassy area of the park.

Will a sign be enough? I don't think so. Here are a few examples why:

Currently some dog owners take their dogs into the tennis courts to run free. There is a sign on the courts that prohibits this.

People park in the center lane, there are signs prohibiting this.

Dog owners leave their bagged poop on the side of the side walk. The signs say pick up after your dog.

Residents policing the policy will most likely not work. It is very uncomfortable confronting someone about following the rules.

I don't feel the Jenkins Ranch Park is an appropriate place for an off leash area.

Sincerely,

Orien McGlamery

From: MaryAnne LeBlanc [mailto:freakofnaturehome@gmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, April 08, 2015 11:34 AM

To: Rec

Subject: Jenkins Ranch Park

April 8, 2015

Dear Ms. Metz:

After reading your letter regarding the proposed Off Leash Program for Jenkins Ranch Park, I would like to express my objection. For some reason, I can't get onto the website to take the survey.

I live just over the ridge from the park on Hillcrest Drive and my backyard borders the open space area that extends from the park along the ridge. This small undeveloped area is rich in wildlife. We are extremely fortunate to have a diverse sample of wildlife such as deer, bears, wild turkeys, hawks, cottontail rabbits, squirrels, coyotes and fox. In July, the deer have their fawns, sometimes in my back yard. For a few weeks, the fawns are helpless and are left alone during the day while their mothers feed. I would find it troubling if an unleashed dog were to disturb a newborn fawn or harass any of the other wildlife in the area.

There are irresponsible dog owners in my neighborhood who leave their dogs off leash now. These dogs are allowed to be wherever they want, in the street, in other people's yards. Unfortunately it's only a matter of time before one is hit by a passing vehicle. I don't think anyone wants to see that happen. I have seen these dogs chase deer and have had to intervene.

I moved to Durango and especially this neighborhood because of the wildlife. Please consider the wildlife in the area when making your decision. Thank you.

Sincerely,

MaryAnne LeBlanc
903-9108
330 Hillcrest Drive
Durango, CO 81301

From: David Kirk [mailto:David.Kirk@co.laplata.co.us]
Sent: Wednesday, April 08, 2015 8:49 AM
To: Metz, Cathy; Rec
Cc: korb, julie
Subject: Jenkins Ranch/Sky Ridge Park-----Pilot Off Leash Program-----

Dear Director Metz and Parks' Staff,

I am writing to you today to strongly urge you to reconsider the pilot off leash program at Jenkins for the following reasons:

The park and field are currently occupied by numerous small children, including organized sports such as soccer, baseball, football, etc. Making this park off leash will bring in many additional dogs creating more conflict and potentially dangerous situations.

There are only a few parking spots near the tennis courts, people always park in the median along Jenkins creating a very dangerous situation when cars don't slow down on Jenkins. Creating an off leash park will cause many more people to drive from outside the neighborhood and park in the median which could result in a very serious accident with dogs or children.

The park currently has a problem with dog feces everywhere. My children complain about stepping in feces. Doubling, tripling, or more the current amount of dogs will make this park very difficult for neighborhood children to enjoy.

A park in a large neighborhood with many children is not compatible with an off leash dog park. A park not in a dense neighborhood with many children would be a better alternative.

There are hundreds of miles of trails and thousands of acres of open space within a minute or two in any direction in town that are much better suited to off leash dogs than a busy neighborhood park with no parking.

I have attached a map of an alternative off leash park site that is much more compatible. I strongly encourage you to consider this alternative site instead of the neighborhood park in Sky Ridge. Account Numbers: R420804 R422634 Parcel Numbers: 566521400112 566521400125 .

These two City of Durango lots are nearly 15 acres, very near Sky Ridge, has plenty of parking, no conflicts with existing users, and no dangerous, busy street to park along with high traffic volume and fast drivers.

I would appreciate a response to my concerns above and your thoughts on the alternative site.

Thank you,

David Kirk

15 Kennebec Drive

From: Shannon Gibson [mailto:shannon_gibson@sbcglobal.net]

Sent: Thursday, April 09, 2015 12:26 PM

To: Rec

Subject: Jenkins Ranch survey link doesn't work

Hi,

I received the letter with the survey link for Off Leash Pilot program. I think it's a great idea! I've copied and pasted Jenkins Ranch Park Off Leash Pilot Program Survey into the browser and it doesn't seem to work. Perhaps you can help?

Thanks,

Shannon Gibson

(staff responded with an active link)

From: Gayle Bedor [mailto:durangobelle@bresnan.net]

Sent: Thursday, April 09, 2015 11:08 AM

To: Rec

Subject: park survey

Dear Cathy,

I could not access the site, so I will write my comments to you. I definitely oppose dogs being off-leash at Jenkins Ranch Park (I am not familiar with Fanto Park). As you well know, pet owners are not always responsible, and dogs off-leash are not always under voice control; any off-leash privileges would result in more dogs not under control, and, probably, more dog feces, as well. Many, many children (also not always under control) and families use JRP; would it mean that an off-leash dog would chase the balls/Frisbees that are thrown, possibly disrupting play-time? Would it mean that a child would possibly try to get that ball away from a dog that jumped in to catch it? How about the family picnics – most dogs are attracted to food, let alone an attraction to a young child who is holding a sandwich while playing. Also, wildlife wander through JRP; if dogs are loose, more chases would result. I was once bitten by a neighbor's dog: my friend and I were walking down her driveway together, and her dog just

jumped up and nipped at me – totally unprovoked. JRP is far too well-used to take that chance. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely, Gayle Bedor

(staff provided active link to survey)

From: James Burger [mailto:burgabyss@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, April 10, 2015 10:00 AM

To: Rec

Subject: Jenkins Park Ranch proposed off leash program

Received April 6th letter,

My family has lived near this park for the last year,

My Comment for the record is " THIS IS A BAD IDEA"

The Jenkins Ranch Park is already a place I will not take my grand children to play because of all the dogs that are allowed to run loose,

You cannot enjoy a picnic or play tennis without some slobbering mutt trying to check you out, while suffering the usually neglectful owners shouts of " Oh they are just being friendly".

We moved from a place near the River Trail where dogs became a daily problem , owners would bag the poop and then leave the bags along the trail for the poop fairy to pick up. the leash law was not enforced,

Last year while on the river trail I was bitten by a yellow lab, that was on a leash, The owner fled with the dog, I reported the incident to animal control while at the emergency room at Rivergate, The animal control officer admitted the lack of employees and funding to address the animal problem . nothing was ever done.

Smelter Park is more than most communities have, Daily I see dogs are with owners running free along the trails, being walked by their owners past our house and under foot at most retail stores in Durango,

I feel your proposal only encourages more bad behavior. In Durango I see and hear dogs shut up in houses or cars, or left in back yards to irritate the neighbors with their constant barking, I do not see a dog park solving these kind of issues

If you check with the emergency room employees they will tell you most bite victims are small children, Our park seems to be created for small children - we need to protect them!

You have leash laws and animal issues that you are unable to enforce, why complicate it , I was raised in the mid-west when animals became a problem the states put a bounty on them. Your Animal shelter is already over capacity

The problem is not space for dogs to run free, the problem is there is a dog population that is out of control.

Please consider this email a NO VOTE

Sincerely James M. Burger

39 Ophir

Durango Co. 81301

From: Barbara Aylaian [mailto:aylaian53@icloud.com]

Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2015 3:43 PM

To: Rec

Subject: Proposed Dog Park at the Jenkins Ranch Park

Regarding this idea, a number of serious concerns come to mind:

Currently the park is used by all age groups, families with small children and sometimes children running and playing alone without any direct supervision. The introduction of dogs off leash presents a potentially dangerous situation if a dog is off leash. Many owners are aware of DRO's leash law and proper disposal of dog waste. However, there are some residents who continually ignore this law within Skyridge and the city of Durango. I am concerned that this area will become a "mine field" of dog excrement/waste.

After years of struggle, the public parking situation in Skyridge continues to be a problematic and at times hazardous. It has improved to the point where it is somewhat safer since the enforcement of the centerline parking violations. A dog park on Jenkins Ranch road will add to and increase the existing parking problems. The introduction of more vehicles owned by dog owner looking for a place for their dogs to run would severely exacerbate an already overloaded parking problem on the street and in the Jenkins Ranch parking lot.

I am an animal lover and currently only own a cat as my dog passed away, but the idea of a dog park in an already existing problematic area (i.e. lack of parking and places for adults and children to partake in leisure activities), feel this idea is ludicrous !

Lastly, I believe that an installation of a basketball court (or half of one court) for our children to play basketball would serve a better purpose to the children in Skyridge and the community, then continually let the children play in their driveways or the streets. People, especially children should be the priority over another dog park.

Thank you for the opportunity to bring my concerns to your attention.

Barbara Aylaian

Skyridge Resident

From: Diane West [mailto:dianewestjewelry@gmail.com]

Sent: Saturday, April 11, 2015 12:00 PM

To: Rec

Subject: proposed off lease program at Fanto Park

Hello,

I am very much opposed to the pilot off lease program at Fanto Park.

I have lived in this neighborhood since 2000 and have witnessed that many people neglect to pick up after their dogs. I don't think it's fair to the children (or staff) at Park Elementary to have their playground covered in dog feces. In addition it seems that most dogs in this town are poorly trained. I have had countless experiences on the bike path and trail systems where people's dogs have jumped on me, barked at me, and scratched me. There have been 2 incidences where I actually felt threatened and one where a dog tried to bite my face.

It has been my experience that in the trail systems, bike paths and parks of Durango lease laws are often ignored. I would like to see the current lease laws enforced instead of being relaxed.

Diane West

841 E. 5th Street

Durango, CO 81301

From: tom west [mailto:ctwest@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, April 16, 2015 9:11 AM

To: Rec

Subject: Proposed Off-Leash Program

My comments based on 15 years experience in Skyridge

Some dog owners continually have shown disrespect for leash laws in effect on city trails. They will often say how friendly their off-leash dog is as it growls, lays back its ears and shows its teeth. Why would I expect that dog owners turning their dogs loose in Jenkins Ranch Park would have control of them off leash when they currently do not conform to leash laws and often do not have control of their dogs?

We continually clean dog waste from our yard so why would I expect dog owners in Jenkins Ranch Park to clean up dog waste from their off-leash dogs?

I do not want a pilot program in Jenkins Ranch Park. Dog owners have not shown widespread courtesy for controlling their animals, cleaning up after them and allowing them to urinate on plants in our yard.

Charles West

From: kjanelson@cox.net [mailto:kjanelson@cox.net]

Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2015 8:04 AM

To: Rec

Subject: Jenkins Ranch Dog Park

We are part time residents in Durango. Our second home is in the Jenkins Ranch area and our primary home in Phoenix, Az. We have not received your survey for the proposed Jenkins Ranch Dog Park proposal.

Could you please send to us via email?

We are highly opposed to allowing the dog park. It would increase the traffic in an already narrow street, there is very limited parking available and it would increase the number of people in the neighborhood. Additionally, I have never been to an area that is supposed to be "environmentally conscience" where so many dog owners do not clean up after their dog. We own a dog and walk ours twice daily in the neighborhood and park. We always carry bags to clean up after our dog. However, the park and other areas are already full of dog feces from irresponsible dog owners. Allowing more dogs in the park would contribute to the problem.

Thank you,

Katherine and Rye Nelson

(Link to survey provided by staff)

From: cunefare, carol [mailto:carol.cunefare@judicial.state.co.us]

Sent: Monday, April 20, 2015 2:03 PM

To: Rec

Subject: Pilot Off Leash Program

I have serious concerns with this idea. I live in Sky Ridge, and did not get a letter. A neighbor gave me the email. I previously worked for animal control as well a few years ago. I have considered moving out of Sky Ridge because of the major issue of dogs off leash. It's annoying and inconsiderate to be surrounded by so many people who think it's okay for their dog to run through everyone's yards and defecate anywhere they want. This will just make the situation worse in my opinion. I just wanted to put in my 2 cents!

Sincerely,

Carol Cunefare

Court Judicial Assistant

6th Judicial District

1060 E 2nd Ave Suite 106

Durango CO 81301

Office (970) 247-2304 Ext~6188

Fax: (970) 247-4348

Email: carol.cunefare@judicial.state.co.us

From: jsullivancarney [mailto:jsullivancarney@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, April 20, 2015 10:38 AM

To: Rec

Subject: Pilot off leash pilot program

City of Durango

Pilot off leash pilot program

Jenkins Ranch Park is a heavily used family playground with tennis, swings and a large lawn. It is completely unfenced and I like it that way! As a resident living on this road I find it is essential to be alert while driving by the park as kids dart out into traffic. Children play there every day come snow or sun. I don't believe adding off-leash dogs would be appropriate for many reasons.

1. It will be expensive to do properly. You would need to fence an area for the dogs and owners. Other cities, divide the fenced dog area into small dog and large dog separate enclosures to keep dog attacks to a minimum.
2. The idea of playing on grass where dog poop is all over the grass is disgusting , unsanitary and potentially a health hazard.
3. A dog fight or a child bitten by a dog invites a lawsuit if the city has allowed off leash dogs.
4. Parking is very limited and most people from outside the neighborhood park illegally in the middle lane of Jenkins Ranch Road .

As it is there is no enforcement for off-leash dogs.

I believe neighborhood parks are for all the people to share without being threatened by “friendly” dogs. I am very opposed to this pilot program.

Jennifer Sullivan Carney

47 Kennebec Dr.

Durango, CO 81301

From: MyDurango [mailto:penelope@mydurango.net]

Sent: Sunday, April 19, 2015 10:24 AM

To: Rec

Subject: Proposed Dog Park

Thank you for sending out the letter to notify the Jenkins Ranch Park neighborhood of the proposal to make a dog park, and ask for comments.

I was surprised when I initially read of this idea in the Herald a few weeks ago. I have lived in this subdivision for over five years and see this very nice park used extensively by the families in the neighborhood--all ages from toddlers to oldsters recreate in it. I am against this idea for the following reasons:

1. Clearly A Neighborhood Park. The fields might be vacant during the workday, however are occupied in late afternoons and very much on weekends. Although I have seen up to two or three dogs with neighborhood families in the park, I cannot accept that loose dogs of all numbers, sizes and degrees of "friendliness" are compatible with families playing ball, flying kites, practicing various sports, etc. Large, even small dogs, are a real bite threat to small children, or to their family pet. Additionally, I have seen large rambunctious dogs knock over elementary age children. And despite any city ordinance requiring owners to pick up after their dogs, many do not do so (e.g., the river trail), which would leave excrement for children to step into or fall on. Besides this unpleasant experience, no law requires dogs to be wormed, so the possibility of children acquiring worms could be high.
2. Winter Use. One idea proposed is to fence an area for dogs. This park is heavily used during winter by families for sledding. A fence would put an end to this major winter activity.
3. Traffic. The Jenkins neighborhood already has a great deal of traffic, which certainly would increase when people outside the area bring their dogs to the park. This would increase the noise level and make the roadway unpleasantly busy. The existing parking for park users and tennis players is extremely limited and parking definitely would become a problem. No parking is available outside the small parking lot. In contrast, the present dog park is located off a major public highway and parking is available along Roosa, not in a neighborhood.

Penelope Fisher

From: kjanelson@cox.net [mailto:kjanelson@cox.net]

Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2015 8:04 AM

To: Rec

Subject: Jenkins Ranch Dog Park

We are part time residents in Durango. Our second home is in the Jenkins Ranch area and our primary home in Phoenix, Az. We have not received your survey for the proposed Jenkins Ranch Dog Park proposal.

Could you please send to us via email?

We are highly opposed to allowing the dog park. It would increase the traffic in an already narrow street, there is very limited parking available and it would increase the number of people in the neighborhood. Additionally, I have never been to an area that is supposed to be "environmentally conscience" where so many dog owners do not clean up after their dog. We own a dog and walk ours twice daily in the neighborhood and park. We always carry bags to clean up after our dog. However, the park and other areas are already full of dog feces from irresponsible dog owners. Allowing more dogs in the park would contribute to the problem.

Thank you,

Katherine and Rye Nelson

(Staff provided link to the survey)

From: Sarah Bong [mailto:sarahbong2@hotmail.com]

Sent: Friday, April 24, 2015 11:10 AM

To: Metz, Cathy

Subject: Off Leash Parks

Dear Cathy,

I'm writing in response to finding out about the proposed off leash programs at Jenkins Ranch and Fanto Parks. I am dismayed to hear that the City is considering allowing these programs in parks that my family spends a great deal of time in. We are asking the City not allow off leash programs at these parks and pursue other avenues for dog owners who feel the need to have their animals off leash.

My husband and I have lived in Skyridge for almost ten years. We have four children under the age of nine and have spent countless hours at the Jenkins Ranch Park. It is extremely rare for us to be at the park when there are not dogs running off leash. This happens so frequently that we have almost stopped going to the park entirely. Off leash dogs and the carelessness of their owners have ruined so many of our trips to the parks that I have my kids stay in our backyard or drive to other city parks instead.

I can recall one time in particular that we were playing ball in the grassy field on the south end of the park. A dog ran up to my son barking and jumping up on him. He was terrified, crying and begging us to get the dog off of him (thankfully he was not hurt.) The dog's owner joined us several minutes later, laughing and commenting on how much her dog loves children. When I pointed out that my son was scared and that her dog was supposed to be on a leash, the owner just laughed again and told us how friendly her dog was. This is very typical of dog owners that we run into at the park- a disregard for current laws (dogs are supposed to be on leash) and a lack of respect for other citizens.

Another time we were walking our dog on the sidewalk next to the park when he was attacked by another dog off leash. While we tried to extricate our dog from the fight because we had him on a leash, there was no way to keep the other dog away from him. He suffered serious injuries, and we encountered a huge vet bill. Thankfully our 18 month old was in a hiking backpack on my husband's back instead of walking beside us or in a stroller as the dogs fought at our feet. All dog owners that allow their dogs to run off leash will tell you that their dogs are friendly and would never hurt anyone. Dogs can be provoked at any time, for reasons we can't see or don't understand. They should not be allowed to run free around small children and busy streets. We have a new neighbor whose son was attacked by a dog. He was badly hurt and is terrified by dogs. Going to our neighborhood park is difficult when so many neighbors feel their need to take their dogs off leash overrides others being able to enjoy the park.

As for Fanto Park, I have had kids attending Park Elementary for the past four years. We spend time in Fanto Park every single school day. My mantra when I pick up the kids from school is, "Watch out for dog poop!" My husband has coached dozens of park and rec soccer teams and holds practices at Fanto when it is available. Kids step in dog poop often at practice or have to play around the guy playing Frisbee with his dog. The level of irresponsibility of dog owners at this park is annoying and dangerous.

While the proposed off leash plans have requirements dog owners must follow, many dog owners currently do not adhere to the city's ordinances regarding their pets already. There is no reason they would follow new guidelines. We are asking that the city not only squash these programs at Jenkins Ranch and Fanto Parks, but we hope the city would start enforcing the leash laws currently in affect in these areas with high numbers of children present. Please keep our parks safe and enjoyable for all of Durango's residents.

Sincerely,

Sarah Bong

From: Tina Downey [mailto:tina_marie34@hotmail.com]

Sent: Friday, April 24, 2015 11:05 AM

To: Metz, Cathy

Subject: Fanto Park

Hi,

I heard that there was a chance Fanto Park could become an off leash area for dogs. I would not be for this, since it is a public park it would not mix to have school children out and dogs running all over.

Thanks,

Tina Downey

From: Kristen Dugan [mailto:kris10jennifer@hotmail.com]

Sent: Friday, April 24, 2015 10:07 AM

To: Metz, Cathy

Subject: Fanto Park

Hello Cathy,

Please add me to list of parents who are against the dog park at Fanto Park. There are so many reasons that is not a good idea.

For example:

1. Security and safety of the children who go to school at Park Elementary from dog owners as well as the unpredictable behavior of dogs.
2. Countless times that the students at Park have had dog poop all over their shoes and clothes, mine included. You can ask the school nurse and front desk about how often this happens.
3. There are a lot of after-school activities where there are children using the area such as Kids Camp and countless sports practices.
4. Irresponsible dog owners who are not mindful of the impact they are making on the school playground.
5. There is already an off-leash dog park within 2 miles of Fanto Park where they can go. It is a GREAT dog park!

Thank you for communicating the concerns of the parents to the City of Durango and those in the loop who are making the decisions.

Kristen Dugan

From: dorothy bregar [mailto:dorothy.bregar@yahoo.com]

Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2015 10:08 PM

To: Rec

Subject: Dog Park at Jenkins Ranch Park

Dear Ms. Metz,

I have a couple of additional comments to the survey I filled out concerning the proposed dog parks. I am concerned about noise coming from the dog park. We already hear barking dogs from both Sky Ridge and Hillcrest and would hate to have to listen to even more barking dogs.

I would also like to see the walk-through that connects Hillcrest to Jenkins Ranch Park from the cul-de-sac at the end of Jenkins Rd. be improved with either a gravel, stone, or cement walk way going from the connector to the parking lot. The area can be a bit watery at times.

Thank you,

Dorothy Bregar

506 Hillcrest Dr.

Durango

From: AUTUMN MAYCOCK [mailto:autumn_maycock@msn.com]

Sent: Friday, April 24, 2015 8:26 AM

To: Metz, Cathy

Subject: Fanto park

Good morning,

I was told that Fanto Park (Park Elementary School Playground) is considering making it a dog park. I believe this means that dogs are not required to be on leash? I heard it would be similar to Smelter dog park.

I really think that this is a terrible idea. No issue with dogs on the leash but off leash at a elementary school playground is a disaster waiting to happen. There could be TONS of poop for the kids to accidentally slip in and have to wear on their clothes ALL DAY. It could get tracked into the school and

be a huge mess. I like to think people are responsible enough to pick up after their dogs, but some won't!

ALSO, there is a chance a child could be bit, chased, or jumped on. Not just during school but after school there are children activities taking place and kids running every where.

Just wanted to voice my opinion. Why can't they make another dog park at an actual park (not school playground)that won't be so packed with kids running and playing.Thank you for your time.

Autumn Maycock

From: Niki Bryant [mailto:nikibryant00@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, April 24, 2015 7:17 AM

To: Metz, Cathy

Subject:

Please please DO NOT consider making The park area at Park Elementary an off leash dog Park. I disagree with it being a park open to the public during school hours as it is.

Also, there have been many, many occasional of kids stepping in dog poop again and again which is unacceptable. Please do NOT consider making this park off leash for dogs. That is an enormous liability as well, should there be a dog that hurts a child.

Sincerely,

-Niki

Niki Bryant Photography

From: jeremy dugan [mailto:jdugan172@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, April 24, 2015 7:09 AM

To: Metz, Cathy

Subject: Dogs and kids

Dear Cathy,

I recently heard about the incredibly horrible idea to turn the field at Park Elementary into an off leash dog park. At first, I thought it was a joke. Kids, sports and dogs do not mix well. I understand that the field is technically a city park. However, our children must be our first priority. All parks that are attached to schools have a responsibility to provide a safe and CLEAN area for kids to play and practice.

If this passes, who's office would you like me to drop off the dog poop that I pick up and which city department will be in charge of cleaning our kids shoes and clothes? I have already had multiple incidents with dog owners not cleaning up after their pets and it's not officially a dog park yet. From a legal stand point, providing an area for dogs to run free where kids and coaches run practices is inviting lawsuits. I can promise you, I will be watching this very closely and will make it my personal crusade to see this plan stopped.

There are already areas in the city for dogs. Not to mention, millions of acres of national forest and trails. Please use some common sense and keep pets away from schools.

Thank you,
Jeremy Dugan

From: Carol [carolbrian@durango.net]

Sent: Friday, April 24, 2015 4:01 PM

To: White, Dick

Subject: Pilot Off Leash Program

Dear Dick,

First of all, congratulations on your re-election; and thanks for your willingness to serve Durango.

The attached statement has been sent to Parks & Recreation. It references an idea being proffered to establish another off leash dog area.

As outlined within the attached message, perhaps more space is required to satisfy the number of dog owners in this town, but not on dedicated park space originally and primarily intended for human use and enjoyment.

Accordingly, I've also responded to the survey (a survey which appears to be designed and skewed in favor of this misdirected proposal.) Letting the dog off the leash even on a trial basis, in this instance, trumps "letting the cat out of the bag".

Please refer to the attachment for the crux of the problem. As a former parks and recreation professional, I prevail upon the city council to take my comments under advisement prior to allowing Jenkins Ranch Park to be an off leash dog area.

Thank you for your time, attention and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,
Brian McAleer

I have already registered my concerns (via your survey) regarding the idea of an off leash program for dogs at Jenkins Ranch Park. Therein, I outlined a wide variety of reasons why I don't believe that this proposal should go forward.

Understanding the passion that exists between dog owners and their pets and assuming that the need for another unleashed dog area has been conveyed by them; there still remains here a fundamental imposition. Such an area would be right in the middle of a residential setting with an established park.

The point is that parks should be for all of the people. Certainly, this includes people who love dogs along with those who would rather not deal with dogs in any way or fashion. Imposing an off leash dog area awards a certain priority that cannot be favorable to some people. I'm sure that there are a sizeable number of dog owners that understand this issue. Such a problem does not exist at the present location (off route 160) precisely because it is segregated from the general population. Dog owners can enjoy the place while those not so inclined can stay away.

Presently, many of the requirements of this Pilot Off Leash Program are not being properly observed. For example, more dogs are off leash than not. Neither Animal Control nor the Police have the staff or time to deal with such minor violations. Proper disposal of dog waste is already a problem, not to mention lack of available parking nearby. All of these kind of things would increase. And it appears unrealistic to assume that a Park Ambassador program would alleviate this situation.

Any expansion of dog owners' wishes for more land must take this into consideration. People should be able to choose whether or not they want to be in the midst of dogs rather than have that imposed upon them.

Brian McAleer

From: Heather Hooten [mailto:hooten108@gmail.com]

Sent: Saturday, April 25, 2015 6:18 PM

To: Metz, Cathy

Subject: Off Leash Dog Parks

Hello Cathy~

My name is Heather Hooten and I wanted to give some feedback from my perspective on the off leash dog park proposal. First, I would like to acknowledge that I am aware that this has been presented as a temporary trial.

Interestingly, I have two very different stances...As a resident in Skyridge, I honestly don't see that much will change. Of course, there is always the concern of a dog not being under control and a possible unfortunate incidence happening, but this area is big and quite honestly, I rarely see dogs on a leash at this time anyway. In my opinion, the playground is far enough away from the grassy area that any child/dog interactions could be minimized. For whatever it's worth, I feel quite differently about Fanto Park. Having a first grader who attends Park elementary, let me just say that it's bad enough when he gets home with grass stains and mud-but when dog poo is involved, it takes it to an entirely new level. I

understand that there is some gray area about this park in particular-but as it stands, this park is currently used as an elementary school playground. It would be quite sad to have an incident happen and I believe that being in such close proximity to, well, everything, it may be OVER utilized. I admit that I cringe when I see a dog during recess running off leash, and I wonder about the potential blurred lines during school hours. Bottom line, for me, is that I wouldn't advocate to have Fanto Park an off leash facility.

Thank you so much for allowing me to share my thoughts, I appreciate all that you do for our wonderful city.

Warmly,

Heather Hooten

Hooten108@gmail.com

From: Marbury, Sweetie

Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2015 11:55 AM

To: Metz, Cathy; City Council; LeBlanc, Ron

Subject: Off leash

Cathy,

I am sending you my thoughts on the proposed off leash dog program.

The City of Durango has a Dog Park. The public school grounds do not seem to be an appropriate place for dogs to be off leash.

I have encountered young people in Brookside Park with their dogs off leash when I had my grandchildren with me. I don't like it as a grandparent. When I approached the man we began to argue even though signs are posted.

Fanto Park is part of a school. The principal spoke with me and thought it to be a poor idea.

I had complaints from neighbors concerned with dogs off leash at Jenkins Ranch Park.

Parks are for people. I had complaints about dog feces not being picked up on the trail. I do not believe doggie good manners will be any better in a school playground or a city park.

Sincerely,

Sweetie Marbury

City Council

From: matt@flatrocksolar.com [mailto:matt@flatrocksolar.com] On Behalf Of Matthew Helms

Sent: Monday, April 27, 2015 5:16 PM

To: Rec

Subject: Canto Park Off Leash Program

Hi Cathy,

As a city resident living near Fanto Park, I'm writing you in opposition of an off leash program at Fanto Park. I think it is inappropriate to have dogs in the elementary school playground. Most dog owners are probably responsible in keeping their dogs under control and picking up their feces, but unfortunately some dog owners don't.

There are too many children that use that park every day to have dog feces in the grass and play equipment areas. I have seen feces left in the park on many occasions and imagine that the children that use the park step in it (or worse) and track it into the school or home.

There is already a large off leash area in Durango that is not used by school children ever day; dog owners should take their dogs to that area if they want to let them off leash.

Again, I strongly oppose designating Fanto Park as an off leash dog area.

Sincerely,

Matt Helms

From: Carly Van Hof Thomson [mailto:carly@ripages.com]

Sent: Monday, April 27, 2015 9:51 AM

To: Metz, Cathy

Subject: Dog Park @ Fanto Park - Park Elementary School

Hi Cathy:

I'm writing because I'm concerned about the proposed dog park at Fanto Park. I am a big dog lover and huge advocate for a dog friendly community (we have two dogs ourselves and have fostered over 20 puppies for local non-profit, Lisa Parker's Puppies).

That being said, I also have a child in school at Park Elementary.

While I support having more dog friendly parks, I'm concerned and perplexed by the suggestion to open Fanto as a dog park. This is the main park/playground for Park Elementary students. How will the community ensure a safe playground for children if Fanto is open to the public as a dog park? I have a few concerns:

- 1) Will this encourage folks to visit this park with their dogs during school hours, crowding the children's playground with unregulated adults and dogs?
- 2) How will you ensure the safety of the children around unregulated dogs?
- 3) How we will keep our children from playing in a field of dog poop? I get that owners are supposed to pick up their dog's poop, but it doesn't always happen, and I really don't like the idea of the kids running and playing through a field of poop.
- 4) Dog parks don't hold turf very well – since dogs pee everywhere (killing grass) and run free, tearing up the turf. This will dramatically affect the quality of the play area for the children.
- 5) If the goal is to keep the children on the playground and not in the turf, I have an even bigger problem with that, as room to run and conduct gross motor movements is critical for Elementary kids.

In short, while I fully support a dog friendly community, I don't think our elementary school's playground is the right place. Our kids should come first.

Sincerely,

Carly Thomson

carly@ripages.com

From: Adam W [mailto:adam.weber1@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, April 24, 2015 7:42 PM

To: Metz, Cathy

Subject: Off lease pilot program

Dear Cathy I am writing in response to the off lease pilot programs which have been proposed. I would like to voice my objection to the use of fanto park as well as the sky ridge park as the trial areas. As a resident of the sky ridge area I can assure u there is already an off lease attitude at this park and dog waste is an issue. Many children use this park on a daily basis and cleaning dog waste off clothes and shoes is bad enough now. I can't imagine that a sanctioned off lease use of the park will make it any better.

In regards to using fanto park as an off lease area is even more alarming. Again as is stands now people let their dogs play there off lease regularly. As a parent of park elementary school children we have also have had dog waste brought into our car and home from shoes which stepped in waste during recess. I can't even believe an elementary school was considered for this. Why not the high school or the football field at fort Lewis.

I coach soccer for elementary kids at fanto and along with setting up soccer fields I have to police dog waste. Obviously this is not fun and takes time away from coaching and playing w the kids

While I appreciate pet owners (I am a pet owner myself)concerns and desires). These parks are for our children and not our four legged friends. Most pet owners are responsible but unfortunately some are not. Dog waste is unpleasant to deal with as well as unsanitary and dangerous when our kids are involved.

I believe there is ample areas surrounding Durango where owners can take their dogs to roam free. For one there is a huge field at fort Lewis that can not be used for sports, is fenced and not being used that would serve as a perfect trial spot to see the effects of unleashed pets and dog waste.

Again please try and find areas away from where children play and spend apt of time

Thank you for your time

Adam weber

970 403-2343

47 Kennebec Drive

Durango, CO 81301-9490

April 18, 2015

520-888-9055

jenjercarney@gmail.com

City of Durango Parks and Recreation

2700 Main Avenue

Durango, CO 81301

RE: Proposed Pilot Off-Leash Program

We live near the northern end of Jenkins Ranch Road and a mere 300 ft from the Skyline Trailhead. We see first hand the reality of "off-leash". There seems to be an informal gathering of dog owners who meet at this trailhead most mornings. The dogs are for the most part, off-leash. I realize that the dogs are "having so much fun", but at the expense of the wildlife they love to chase and the safety of dog-free walkers such as myself- I have been nipped twice by these dogs just as the owners yell "oh, he/she won't hurt you"; the most common phrase as one passes dogs.

Jenkins Ranch Park is a heavily used family, kid, playground, tennis, and general lawn-game park. Parking is very limited and most people from outside the neighborhood park illegally in the middle lane of Jenkins Ranch Road . You must remain constantly alert while driving by the park as kids dart out into traffic. But it is a good place for kids to play. I don't believe adding off-leash dogs would be appropriate

and the dog owners who do use the park should be ticketed for off-leash dog walking. Once you add a concentration of off-leash dogs, you are inviting a lawsuit as dogs tend to pack-up and often attack the smaller dogs, and then on to small children. You would need to fence off an entire area for the dog people and then, as done in other municipalities, divide the fenced dog area into small dog and large dog separate enclosures, as I indeed have seen large dogs in this town attacking what must seem to them to be weaker dogs.

And then there is the issue of dog poo. Some people in this area make a half-hearted attempt at cleaning up after their dogs. As you know, there is always a good smear of residue left. And of course the bagged poo, left for later and forgotten, fermenting in the sun. At Jenkins Ranch Park, there are dozens of kids rolling around on that grass each day. Not good. This became such a problem in Boulder County two decades ago that by the early 1990's, dogs were banned from all city trailheads due to the total mess at each trailhead. You know how it goes: dogs arrive by car, dogs let out of car and first thing, pee and poo. Multiply that one incident by 100's each day and you have a smelly gross health hazard.

We believe neighborhood parks are for people first. We are opposed to this pilot program.

Sincerely;

Robert Gerald Carny

Jennifer S Carney

From: wardmaggie@mydurango.net [mailto:wardmaggie@mydurango.net]

Sent: Monday, May 11, 2015 7:24 AM

To: Rec

Subject: Jenkins Ranch Dog Park

My name is Ward Olson & I reside at 408 Hillcrest Dr. & have lived at that location for over 21 years.

I am a responsible dog owner & have owned dogs for the last 55 years I am writing to recommend a resounding "NO" on the issue of converting a portion of the Jenkins Ranch Park Complex into a dog park.

First & foremost this Park was conceived, presented, & sold as a multi use recreational park for area residents. It was never presented as a future dog park catering to every dog owner who chose to use it.

The proposed dog park location in the catch basin is currently utilized on a daily basis by children. For example I walked down there yesterday PM & observed eight children playing soccer & six adults sitting on the slope observing. The sloping sides kept the ball within the area of play.

During the Winter Months the basin attracts even more children on a daily basis utilizing the slopes for sledding, tubing, & rolling snow balls. I have observed upwards of 25 children & adults at a time utilizing this area. You now propose to change this high traffic play area into a facility for dogs?

In addition a dog park would present manifold issues & hazards as well as sanitation problems & odors.

You cannot presuppose that all dog owners & parents are responsible. The separation of pit bulls & toddlers requires much more than an adequate fence. There will always be owners who will walk their dogs off leash to the park & innocent children who will rush to embrace a dog.

Lack of parking will necessitate pet owners to park in the center of Jenkins Ranch Drive or elsewhere & walk to the dog park past children playing. The tennis court parking is simply inadequate to handle current requirements.

Additionally the park green belt is a wildlife habitat & we already have issues with irresponsible pet owners allowing an occasional escape by an untrained pet & the chasing of fawns until collapse. One pet owner in particular living across from the park feels it is perfectly to release their dog in the early AM to run to the park to Poop & chase wildlife at six AM. Animal Control does not patrol at this time nor late PM in the summer. Just how do you propose to provide for additional animal control patrol this will necessitate.

An additional issue is sanitation facilities for humans. The park now has restrooms that are open for summer months only. The tennis courts open months in advance of the restrooms. I would propose you visit the copse of trees adjacent to the tennis courts & count the wads of Kleenex discarded from using this cover as a bathroom.

In closing I'll state that I realize that common sense objections cannot overturn decision that has already been made by a Government entity & this proposed park has an unstoppable momentum. In the end it will be resident children, pets, & wildlife that will suffer the consequences for this action.

Ward Olson

From: Roy [mailto:gustben@msn.com]

Sent: Tuesday, May 12, 2015 10:53 AM

To: Metz, Cathy

Subject: Jenkins Ranch Road Family Park

Hi Cathy,

I stopped by your office this morning after my workout and was sorry that I was unable to see you. We have a concern over the possibility of our lovely "Family Park" being turned into a "Dog Park". We purchased our home on Jenkins Ranch Road in 2002 with the promise of a family park coming soon. When the park was finished it was beautiful and many families make good use of the park.

It is my understanding that there is already a dog park by the river across from Santa Rita Park and it appears that it is centrally located in our community and an abundance of space for its purpose.....which is for owners and their dogs.

Our park, Jenkins Ranch Road Park, is a well used facility used by families and some dog owners do use the grassy area to exercise their dogs. My concern is that our lovely park should never be designated as a "dog park".....there is one available a few minutes away.

We would ask you to please consider the residents our "our neighborhood" and keep our Family Park a Family Park,

Regards,

Barbara Gust

339 Jenkins Ranch Road

(970) 259-7627

From: kathy.morozowich@yahoo.com [mailto:kathy.morozowich@yahoo.com]

Sent: Tuesday, May 12, 2015 9:43 PM

To: Hitchell, Tana

Subject: Jenkins Ranch Park dog pilot program

Hello Cathy,

As a homeowner in the Skyridge subdivision, I am concerned about the possibility of dogs being allowed off leash at Jenkins Ranch Park for several reasons.

Firstly, Parking spaces are very limited at the park as it is. Parking is not allowed on Jenkins road for the safety of our children and an increase in people using the park to exercise their pets would make parking on side streets more congested than they already are and increase traffic to the neighborhood.

Secondly, regarding the current situation at the park, people already allow their dogs to be off leash and the grass area is full of dog waste and would be an increased sanitary issue if more people came to the park for this purpose.

Thirdly, the turf is in very good shape and would get destroyed if a lot of dogs are playing together - one only needs to look at the current dog park by the river to see this. I have been to similar places in my travels, Austin, Texas and Indianapolis, Indiana for example and the areas set aside for dog parks have ruined turf and dog waste everywhere. We had a chocolate lab for 10 years before she passed away and I am not against having places for dogs to play but right next to a playground is not the place for it. When we had our dog we visited the current one several times a month and found it appropriate and there was plenty of space for the dogs to play and get exercise.

I visit Jenkins park several times a week now having four children and have to watch the littler ones like a hawk as it is. Having more dogs off leash is not a good idea. Children have a right to play on the playground and not worry about dog bites or being knocked over by an excited dog. Several times I have

had to ask people to leash their dogs because they didn't have voice control of them. Their remark is always "my dog is friendly and won't hurt anyone." It only takes one time for something bad to happen.

The current dog park has plenty of room to allow dogs exercise and to be social with other dogs. Playgrounds are not a place to allow dogs off leash. In a perfect world, dog owners would be responsible and clean up after their pet and have their pet well trained but that isn't the case and I don't want to see the park overrun as a place people in town take their dogs to get exercise after work or in the weekends. I feel the park would get ruined and be an unsafe place due to increased traffic and for the children who play there.

If you have any questions please contact me.

Thanks,

Kathy Morozowich

27 Ophir Dr

303-641-5591
