



Memorandum

Date: 2/28/2023

Meeting of: Committee of the Whole - Parks and Environmental Sustainability

File No. CM 23-095

Type: Committee Memo

TO: Committee of the Whole - Parks and Environmental Sustainability

FROM: Mayor Angela Birney

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR CONTACT(S):

Parks	Loreen Hamilton	425-556-2107
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DEPARTMENT STAFF:

Parks	David Tuckek	Deputy Director
Parks	Caroline Chapman	Parks Planning Manager

TITLE:

Demonstration Dog Park and Community Garden Expansion Update

OVERVIEW STATEMENT:

The purpose of this briefing is to provide information on the selection of Luke McRedmond Park as the site for the City's first Demonstration Dog Park project and plans for expanding community gardens at Juel Park for the 2023 growing season. The City of Redmond's Parks and Trails Commission raised interest in creating a demonstration dog park and expanding community gardens ('Puppies and Parsnips'), which was supported by Council as demonstrated by the allocation funding in the next biennium.

☐ **Additional Background Information/Description of Proposal Attached**

REQUESTED ACTION:

☒ **Receive Information**

☐ **Provide Direction**

☐ **Approve**

REQUEST RATIONALE:

- **Relevant Plans/Policies:**
Adopted PARCC Plan (2017) identifies a dog park or off-leash area in the downtown as a midterm (2023-2030) project.
2023/2024 Budget includes \$102,000 for the implementation of a Demonstration Dog Park and \$72,000 for the implementation of community gardens.
- **Required:**
N/A
- **Council Request:**
Council Retreat Action Items

- **Other Key Facts:**

The need for an off-leash dog area comes with an increase in residents living in multifamily housing in the downtown urban center. These residents are often without access to suitable private outdoor space. With this growth, there has been anecdotal evidence of an increase in downtown parks and open spaces being used for dog walking and play which comes with more frequent issues with dog waste and conflicts between users. Signage has been placed reminding users these are not off-leash areas, and “pet stations” with dog waste bags have been made available to try and mitigate the impacts of additional dogs in the Downtown core.

OUTCOMES:

Development of a Demonstration Dog Park in Downtown

The intent of a demonstration project for off-leash dog areas are to: Assess the community desire and need for a new type of park facility, understand maintenance needs and community impact via temporary installation, assess potential sites for a permanent facility, and provide an off-leash dog area in the Downtown area as identified in the 2017 PARCC Plan and further supported by the 2023 PARCC Plan outreach.

Expand Garden Plots at Juel Park

In 2023, Juel Park is the best site to operationalize additional community garden plots. By expanding at the site that has existing infrastructure, new beds can be added more quickly and allow for users to take advantage of the 2023 growing season. New garden beds will expand the capacity of the system and support goals for local and sustainable food production.

Evaluation of Off-Leash Areas as Park Amenities

During the time the off-leash demonstration area is active, staff will solicit feedback from the community and users on their experience with this new type of amenity via Let’s Connect Redmond and QAlert. After the area is decommissioned, evaluation will look at benefits, impacts, and maintenance and operation’s needs. Results of the assessment will be shared with the Parks and Trails Commission and Council. At that time, and depending upon the evaluation, a decision will be made on the future of additional demonstration periods or locations or the opportunity to implement a more permanent facility.

Evaluation of Additional Sites for Community Gardens

City Staff will evaluate other park sites that would accommodate community gardens, with a focus on urban locations.

COMMUNITY/STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH AND INVOLVEMENT:

- **Timeline (previous or planned):**

The concept off leash dog area was originally raised in the adopted 2017 PARCC Plan, which underwent substantial community outreach and involvement.

Fall 2021: Parks and Trails Commission Sub-Committee “Puppies and Parsnips”

Spring 2022: Community outreach via the PARCC Plan online questionnaire and mailed survey.

Summer 2022: Intercept event in Downtown and Derby Days tabling feedback focused on potential off-leash dog area locations and levels of support.

Planned for Duration of Operations:

- Staff will utilize the city’s Q-Alert software to track and evaluate feedback on the off-leash area from community members.

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- Online questionnaire will be open throughout the run of the off-leash area to gather more robust feedback on considerations and concerns regarding the area.
- Parks Staff and EUSD will collaborate on an educational campaign around dog waste and impacts on the environment at this site.

- **Outreach Methods and Results:**

Dog parks were one of the highest frequency comments in the 2023 PARCC Plan Update survey and received strong interest and enthusiasm from the community. 44% of respondents say they currently use Redmond's Parks for exercising their dogs. When a wide variety of park improvements were listed in the survey, 38% of respondents stated they believed the city needed additional off-leash facilities, and approximately 59% of all respondents were either supportive or very supportive of adding off-leash areas to existing park facilities. There is also strong community support for additional community gardens as demonstrated by demand and the results of the PARCC Plan.

- **Feedback Summary:**

Additional feedback from the PARCC Plan Survey is available at [LetsConnectRedmond.com/PARCC](https://letsconnectredmond.com/PARCC)

The results of the outreach planned during operations will be determined after the project is decommissioned.

BUDGET IMPACT:

Total Cost:

\$102,000 is budgeted for the implementation, operations, and evaluation of a Demonstration Dog Park in the 2023/24 budget.

\$72,000 is budgeted for the implementation and operations of expanded community gardens in the 2023/24 budget

Approved in current biennial budget:

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ N/A

Budget Offer Number:

CIP

Budget Priority:

Healthy & Sustainable

Other budget impacts or additional costs:

☐ Yes

☒ No

☐ N/A

If yes, explain:

N/A

Funding source(s):

General Fund

Budget/Funding Constraints:

N/A

☐ **Additional budget details attached**

COUNCIL REVIEW:**Previous Contact(s)**

Date	Meeting	Requested Action
N/A		

Proposed Upcoming Contact(s)

Date	Meeting	Requested Action
N/A	None proposed at this time	N/A

Time Constraints:

Parks Maintenance and Operations Staff will begin purchasing materials once Council has been briefed. Aim is for a spring (April/May) opening.

ANTICIPATED RESULT IF NOT APPROVED:

Demonstration Dog Park and additional garden space would not be available to the public in 2023.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Draft Site Plans for Luke McRedmond & Juel Park
- B. Demonstration Dog Park potential site evaluations