

I am excited to see some progress being made on behalf of dog park users in this City. Thank you for this opportunity to make things better.

After presenting at the previous Committee to this Council meeting, I have been told that the lines drawn on the maps in Administrations proposal are more like a marker to show that an off-leash dog park is planned for those general areas. I'm glad to see the details aren't carved in stone but rather are open to modification upon input from interested groups and individuals. I also noticed however, that the proposed sizes are listed. I hope those aren't carved in stone either. I will focus on the Regent Par 3 location as it is one that is suppose to be completed in the 1st phase. The suggested drawing says .4 of a hectare. That equals approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre. The drawing also shows one dog park. The motion made in June at Council called for "dog parkS", with an 'S', plural. That wording was chosen on purpose, deliberately, after much discussion. Remember the phrase 'Small and All'? I want to make sure it is noted that there will be 2 areas in the Regent Par 3 renovation project for dog parks, one for small dogs and one for all dogs and those areas will need to be of an appropriate size for the purpose they are meant for. I would suggest 1 – 1.5 hectares for the 2 parks.

I would also like to talk a bit about 'UNFENCED' off-leash areas. This is not something dog park users have asked for or would use. With the number of rabbits in Regina it would be all too easy for a dog to see one and be off and running into neighbourhoods, traffic and adjoining property which could easily be open fields. It is very difficult if not impossible to call back even the best trained family dog when it sees a wild rabbit hopping away in front of it. While in Edmonton on vacation this summer I spoke with some people in one of their unfenced dog parks and was told about dogs who where killed when that exact thing happened.

One of the locations being proposed as an unfenced off-leash area, Iannone Park is already a multi-use park that is also a 'dry pond' with sloping sides. The space is a lovely green space where people of all ages walk, kids can toboggan in winter and run and play in summer. Adding unleashed dogs to this mix is a mistake. When talking about this space on our Facebook page there was only one person who commented that they would like a multi-use space for her family. There have been dozens and dozens of other comments about how park users do not want that for themselves or their dogs, let alone no fence at all.

With the locations of the new parks we will have many more options for design and won't have to consider what can and can't be done because they are in flood plains or water retention area. More simple, user friendly, and less costly solutions can be used for things like gating, substrate materials and amenities. With nice parks perhaps we as park users could even expand our role and enjoy making improvements to the space as time goes on. We have had ideas brought forward such as creating 'In Memoriam Rock Gardens' for pets who have passed on, growing and planting trees, building bag dispensers and help sourcing advertising funding in some way perhaps. With nice parks, our community will take pride in making our off-leash areas more welcoming and useable spaces. These are just a few ideas that could be explored in the future if we work together.

Rather than wasting money on trials for something we don't want we would rather the City spend that valuable money on getting useable dog parks up and running in Regina in a more timely fashion. You, Mr. Mayor and the Councillors know all too well how long this promise of more dog parks in the city has been delayed and delayed. This is the most progress we have made in years and now there is even a plan, a plan that could actually work and is welcomed. Now is the time to get it done. Get consultation done, get ideas formulated, get designs developed sensibly and completely and get dog parks built throughout the city so they can be enjoyed by the thousands of people and dogs who are currently using the 2 worn out, inadequate 2 parks we have. We look forward to the progress.

Connie Buchan