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THE MILE HIGH CITY

City and County of Denver
Parks and Recreation

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Denver Parks and Recreation announces their Dog Park Master Planning & Policy Recommendation Process

Denver -- Denver Parks and Recreation (DPR) is in the process of kicking off a **Dog Park Master Planning & Policy Recommendation Process**. The ultimate outcome of this process is intended to foster healthy relationships between dog owners, non-dog owners, and all park users. This includes improving Denver's parks and open spaces to support and accommodate all users in a healthy, sustainable environment.

A major component of the community input process is a public survey. Citizens are asked to go to www.denvergov.org/parksandrec and complete the 15-minute dog park survey. Responses will be accepted through **April 30, 2009**. Space is provided within the survey for individuals to leave their contact information for future meeting notification and opportunity to be involved with various committees.

This City-wide effort will evaluate and examine Denver's current pilot dog parks, provide design options and recommendations (site specific), as well as provide enforcement recommendations. Internal and external committees will provide recommendations and help guide the public process. Public meetings also will be held City-wide for community input. Out of this effort, we also hope to establish community involvement and on-going partnerships with off leash dog areas and dog parks.

Tentative Timeline:

March 2009- Survey released on Parks Website. This survey will allow citizens to provide insight and input on current and future off leash dog areas and dog parks in Denver.

June 2009- Public Input Meetings. Process and Document Public Input. (*Meetings are not yet scheduled*).

September / October 2009- Final Master Plan Development, Final Policy Development, Committee Meetings, Public Meetings of Final Recommendations.

Working together to address common issues

As a part of the City's master planning efforts, Denver Parks and Recreation has partnered with Public Works and Environmental Health to work toward more strategic, long-term programs and policies that address several topics related to dog ownership and responsibility. Some of these topics include public outreach around dog waste, off-leash dogs, dog licensing, vaccination, and enforcement. Denver Parks and Recreation is also considering additional pilot off-leash areas while the master planning process is taking place in order to address immediate concerns of safety and

well-being in some of Denver's most dog-populated areas. We hope that by teaming up with our sister agencies, we will offer a more comprehensive plan that addresses the myriad of issues associated with dog waste, water quality and quality of life issues.

Regarding dog waste, Denver Parks and Recreation spent more than \$35,000 on dog waste bags in 2008. It has been decided that the City forgo the old dog waste stations and provide new self-service stations that require citizens to re-stock bags with their own. Providing such standards will preserve tax payer money. The self-service dispensers have been used in various locations throughout the City successfully and are regularly full. We also will be rolling out a pilot project in early summer with a company that will install and maintain dog waste stations in 5-10 parks at no cost to the City. If this pilot project is successful, we hope to roll it out system-wide to help with our overall dog waste management goals.

Many other strategies are being considered for implementation, including enforcement of City ordinances and community outreach efforts. Angela Casias has been designated as the point person for all dog issues. She may be reached at angela.casias@denvergov.org or 720-913-0741.