



Salt Lake County Off-Leash Dog Park Master Plan



June 2008



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & CREDITS

This master plan represents a culmination of the cooperative efforts of a stakeholder advisory committee, representatives of interest groups/organizations, local municipalities, many residents, County Parks & Recreation staff, and Logan Simpson Design. Sincere appreciation and gratitude is given to each and every participant.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In the last few years, the demand for off-leash dog parks has increased dramatically nationwide. Salt Lake County's 2005 "Parks & Recreation Master Plan" states, "The Parks & Recreation Division recognizes the interest and desire for development of parks of this genre (off-leash dog parks) in the community. Substantive discussion needs to precede the creation of single purpose dog parks, or dedicating areas within existing parks, exclusively for off-leash canine activity."

This "Off-Leash Dog Park Master Plan" (DPMP) is a response to the County's PRMP directive to plan and develop new off-leash dog parks. Off-leash dog parks are a relatively new phenomenon. Philosophies and standards regarding best practices for developing, operating, and maintaining such facilities, vary and are still evolving through trial and error. The DPMP is the next step in that evolution and establishes the County's standards for developing new off-leash dog parks.

The County has drawn on internal experience, local dog park proponents' preferences, and the experience of other large municipal parks and recreation departments to obtain guidance in preparing this DPMP for Salt Lake County. Conditions, issues, and concerns that are evident at existing off-leash dog parks have provided insight to the specific items that need to be addressed in developing new successful off-leash dog parks.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this DPMP is to establish guidelines for developing an off-leash dog park system in Salt Lake County. The specific goals of the plan are:

- To establish criteria and standards that will be used when selecting sites and designing new off-leash dog parks.
- To identify service area gaps within the county to determine where additional off-leash dog parks should be located.
- To develop prototypical designs to use as a guideline in the implementation of new facilities.
- To recommend policies and regulations for the operation and management of off-leash dog parks.

1.3 Planning Process Overview

Following are brief descriptions of each of the key steps in developing this plan.

- **Research** was conducted locally, regionally, and nationwide to obtain a clear understanding of what off-leash dog parks are, how they function, and what works best. Local existing dog parks were inventoried and analyzed, and a best practices survey of other similar communities was administered.
- **Public Open Houses** were conducted at two major milestones of the planning process to expose interested residents to the County's efforts and to gain input from them relating to their needs, desires, issues, and concerns regarding off-leash facilities within the Salt Lake Valley.
- **Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC)** consisted of representatives of local interest groups, agencies, municipalities, and townships, as well as residents who

have direct interest in off-leash dog parks. The SAC met three times during the process to give advice and feedback.

- **Establishment of Site Selection Criteria** involved determining specific site selection factors that would serve as a guideline for evaluating potential site locations for future off-leash dog parks.
- **Development of Off-Leash Dog Park Design Standards** was facilitated by information and preferences obtained through research and from stakeholder and public input.
- **Polices and Regulations** recommendations were developed based on existing county law and policy and augmented with information obtained from other jurisdictions operating dog parks.

2.0 RESEARCH

2.1 Introduction

Research efforts for this DPMP were focused on gathering information to understand what makes an off-leash dog park system successful; what factors enable the planning and design of successful dog parks; and what policies, procedures, and regulations have proven to be successful in operating, maintaining, and managing off-leash dog parks. The three main research activities that resulted in securing information and knowledge on each of the items mentioned above included:

- Review of existing local plans and studies.
- Evaluation of existing off-leash dog parks located within Salt Lake Valley.
- Administration of a Best Practices Survey (BPS) for off-leash dog parks in other similar communities.

2.2 Evaluation of Existing Salt Lake Valley Off-Leash Dog Parks

An inventory and analysis of six existing off-leash dog parks within Salt Lake Valley was conducted to identify existing physical site issues, user conflicts, and to assist in determining suitable locations for future off-leash dog parks.

Elements evaluated in the analysis included surface material, access, drainage, site amenities, and maintenance/code compliance. The analysis also included identifying the facility's age, the number of visits each facility generally experiences, improvements needed, whether the facilities are under or overused, and whether the site was originally intended to accommodate an off-leash dog park.

The dog parks evaluated included:

- Herman Frank Park, Salt Lake City
- Lindsey Gardens, Salt Lake City
- Memory Grove, Salt Lake City
- Parley's Historic Park, Salt Lake City
- Sandy City Dog Park, Sandy City
- Millrace Park, Taylorsville City

2.2.1 Existing Off-Leash Dog Park Inventory Matrix

A matrix was developed to document information obtained from inventorying and evaluating the local existing dog parks. This information is summarized in *Table 2.1, Existing Off-Leash Dog Parks Inventory and Evaluation*.

Forty-two site amenities were evaluated and organized into the following five categories.

- Surface Materials – identifies the types of surface materials utilized within the facility.
- Access – identifies the means by which facility users access the site.
- Drainage – identifies the sources of water and issues created due to natural or man made drainage patterns within or adjacent to the facility.

- Site Amenities – includes elements that increase the user friendliness of the facility, enhances the user's experience, and/or encourages longer durations of facility usage.
- Maintenance/Compliance – identifies the level of maintenance and adherence to the most recent local, state, or federal building codes, guidelines, and laws applicable to park and recreation site development.

Each site amenity was given a ranking of good, fair, or poor to document its condition and to identify common deficiencies and issues that need to be addressed in developing new sustainable and successful off-leash dog parks.

Table 2.1 Existing Off-Leash Dog Parks Inventory and Evaluation

	Surface Materials					Access				Drainage			Site Amenities													Maint./Compliance				Acres												
	Crushed Rock	Rock	Grass/Turf	Natural/Dirt	Concrete	Wood Bark/Mulch	On Street Sidewalks	On-Street Parking	Off-Street Parking	Asphalt Path	Concrete Path	Natural/Dirt Path	Mud Puddles/Standing Water	Creeks	Lakes/Ponds	Erosion	Restrooms	Shade Ramadas w/ table	Shade Ramadas w/ benches	Open Picnic Tables	Benches	Site Lighting	Irrigation System	Dog Agility Elements	Dog Play Elements	Drinking Fountain	Hose Bib	Bicycle Racks	Separate area for small dogs		Perimeter Fence/ Enclosed	Entry Areas	Gates	Park Monument Signage	Visibility	Rules Signage	Trash Cans	Doggie Bag Dispensers	Landscape Planter Areas	Trees	Maintenance	Maintenance Access
Salt Lake City																																										
Herman Frank Park			●			●	1	20+	55		1	●			●	1				5			1	2		1	8		1		3	1	○	2	4	1		○	○	2	●	~1.2
Lindsey Gardens			○					20+	38					○	1					1	○	1			1								●	4	2	1		○	○		●	~3.1
Memory Grove			○			○	15				○	○	1		○					○					1						1	●	3	2	2		○	○	1	○	~15	
Parley's Historic Nature Preserve			○			○	1	20+	24		○	○	1	2	○		1			1	○								1				○	2	5	2		○	○	1	●	88.0
Sandy																																										
Sandy City Dog Park		●	○		○		15	24	1			●			○				2	1		1			1				1	2	4		●	1	2	2	1	37	○	1	○	~1.0
Taylorsville																																										
Millrace Park		○	○	●				108		1		●			●	1		2		4	○	1	2	3	1			2	1	1	4		○	5	4	3		15	○	1	○	~1.5

○ - Indicates # of Existing Facilities ○ Good ○ Fair ● Poor

2.2.2 Existing Off-Leash Dog Parks Summary of Relevant Conclusions

Evaluation of the existing off-leash dog parks lead to the following conclusions.

- **Surface Materials.** In order to have a durable, self-sustaining surface, regardless of type, poor drainage must be addressed by not allowing water from on- or off-site flows, spillage from drinking fountain areas, or broken irrigation systems to pond in the off-leash area. In addition, excessive wear and tear of surface materials must be addressed by repairing holes; adding and refreshing wood mulch or granular materials that have migrated into the soil or down slope; and allowing grass areas to rest and regenerate when bare areas become noticeable.
- **Access.** Good site access must include having sufficient and convenient parking; ADA accessible pedestrian access from parking areas into and through the off-leash area; double-gated entryways to allow users to leash and unleash dogs in a non-threatening area; and maintenance gates.
- **Drainage.** Because the majority of drainage issues occur in low spots, near water sources (i.e. drinking fountain areas, creeks), and on steep slopes, it is recommended that off-leash areas be designed to eliminate any low spots or concentrated storm water flows and have a maximum slope of 5:1 (20%). Concentrated pedestrian or canine traffic areas or routes should not exceed a maximum slope of 20:1 (5%). Areas around water sources should be designed to capture run-off into a drain or drywell before the run-off reaches the surface material area. Steep slopes and embankments should be protected by fencing or erosion control materials if bare areas become noticeable in order to prevent them from eroding.
- **Site Amenities.** Trees, benches, trash cans, and waste bag dispensers should be provided in sufficient quantity to make it convenient for users to access them and use them for shade, resting, and clean up. Perimeter fencing should completely enclose off-leash areas in the urban environment and be a minimum of 6-feet in height to prevent dogs from leaving the off-leash area unexpectedly.
- **Maintenance/Code Compliance.** Maintenance alone cannot address or fix issues that occur from poor drainage or overuse. If these issues are addressed in design and operations, sustainable maintenance should include mowing, surface material replenishment, waste and trash pick-up, tree and shrub maintenance, and minor fence and surface repairs once a week.

All off-leash areas must be designed to comply with current International Building Codes (IBC), Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines, and ADA requirements for the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

Deficiencies in most of the facilities included: shade ramadas/shelters, site lighting, irrigation systems, separate use areas for small/passive and large/active dogs, two-gated entryways, park monument signage, and good site visibility.

These conclusions provided insights regarding issues that need to be addressed in developing new sustainable and successful off-leash dog parks. The top five items that require good solutions are:

- Drainage
- Erosion and Compaction (from concentrated- or over- use)
- ADA Accessibility

- Surface Materials
- Site Visibility

Recommendations for addressing these concerns when developing new off-leash dog parks are presented in *Section 6.0, Design Standards*.

2.3 Best Practices Survey

The purpose of the Best Practices Survey (BPS) was to obtain information from other communities that would help the County formulate dog park design standards, location criteria, park types and sizes, operation and maintenance requirements, and establish regulatory enforcement policies for this DPMP.

Ten communities across the country and one in Australia were identified through coordination with County staff and input from the Stakeholders Advisory Committee (SAC). The Park and Recreation Departments of each community were contacted by the County and asked to participate. The following eight communities participated in the survey:

- Albuquerque, New Mexico
- Chicago, Illinois
- Colorado Springs, Colorado
- Phoenix, Arizona
- Portland, Oregon
- Salt Lake City, Utah
- Sydney, Australia
- Taylorsville, Utah

The BPS obtained the following information:

- Background of the community's off-leash dog park system
- Public involvement in their dog park development process
- Location criteria utilized in planning off-leash dog parks
- Design criteria and standards
- Operation and maintenance issues
- Policies, procedures, regulations, and enforcement practices.

In the BPS, the respondents were asked to classify their off-leash dog parks as small (1 acre or less), medium (2-10 acres), large (11-50 acres), or regional (50+ acres).

Following is a summary of the major findings of the BPS responses.

2.3.1 Background Information

- All respondents operated and maintained 100% of their dog parks.
- The average age of the oldest dog park within their system was 8.75 years.
- Approximately 88% of the dog parks were designated as single use facilities.
- Only 55% of the designated off-leash dog parks were fenced.
- Small dog parks - averaged 8 developed parks and 1 natural park per community; were an average of 0.57 acres in size with an average 6 mile service area radius; and they were the easiest to maintain.
- Medium-sized dog parks - averaged 7.25 developed parks and 1.5 natural parks per community; were an average of 3.97 acres in size with an average 5.83 service area radius.

- Large dog parks - averaged 1.5 developed parks and 2 natural parks per community; and were an average of 30.83 acres in size.
- Regulation and policy enforcement was very problematic for 50% of the respondents.

2.3.2 Public Involvement

- Local residents participated in some aspect of the planning process for almost all of the dog parks.
- 75% of respondents rated their overall community support for dog parks as high.

2.3.3 Location Criteria

Each community was given a list of location and siting criteria and asked to rate the elements on how important they were in determining successful locations.

- 75% of respondents said that it was somewhat to very important to locate dog parks adjacent to or within an existing developed park.
- 62.5% of respondents said that it was somewhat to very important to locate dog parks near residential areas with good access from major roads.
- 50% of respondents said that high visibility and flat terrain were somewhat important.

2.3.4 Design Standards

Each community was given a list of various design standards and asked to rate the elements on how important they are for developing successful facilities. Overwhelmingly, 100% of the respondents felt that drinking fountains, for people and dogs, are most important.

The top rated elements are as follows:

- 100% of the respondents felt that drinking fountains, for people and dogs, are most important.
- 87.5% of respondents said that perimeter fencing is most important.
- 62.5% of respondents said that good site drainage was most important.
- 75% of respondents said that shade was somewhat important.
- 87.5% of respondents said that paved pathways are somewhat important.
- 75% of respondents said that varying terrain and agility elements were least important.

Additional elements that respondents identified as being very important in designing and building successful off-leash dog parks included:

- Adequate numbers of benches
- Double-gated entryways
- Nearby parking
- Shade
- Segmenting off-leash areas to allow rotation of use for lawn surfaces
- Signage and information kiosks
- Separate areas for large and small dogs
- Waste-bag dispensers and trash receptacles
- Security lighting

Survey respondents also identified elements that did not work well, and they included the following:

- Grass surfaces of less than 1 acre
- Poor drainage around drinking fountains and water features
- Very small dog parks (less than 0.5 acres)

Other responses and comments relating to the design of successful off-leash dog parks included:

- Developing fewer large and medium sized parks is less expensive and easier to maintain than developing a high number of small parks.
- The most important issue in dog park design is determining the appropriate surface material.
- Grass surface areas are the most difficult and costly surfaces to maintain, but are also the most desired by 67% of the respondents. The larger the grass area is, the easier it is to maintain.
- Natural soil, decomposed granite, and other granular surfaces are only somewhat desired by 50% of the respondents.
- The least desirable surface was synthetic turf.

2.3.5 Operation and Maintenance

The on-going costs of operations and maintenance of off-leash dog parks has been evolving as the demands and usage of dog owners has increased. Each community was asked to identify what specific techniques or approaches have been utilized to reduce operations and maintenance (O&M) costs for their off-leash facilities.

- Rotation of fenced areas allows turf grass areas to rest and rehabilitate.
- Turf grass surface areas require proper irrigation, aeration, and fertilization to maintain optimum turf conditions.
- Turf grass species utilized for high use sports fields wears the best.
- An alternative to turf grass surfaces may be necessary during harsh winter conditions or high wearing areas.
- Engaging volunteer groups to assist in maintaining and self-policing dog parks can reduce operation and maintenance costs.
- Approximately 43% respondents indicated volunteers assist with maintenance and enforcement, with 71% saying they assist with funding.
- The largest material cost of maintaining dog parks is the supply and replacement of waste disposal bags.
- On average, respondents indicated that it takes 4.1 full-time staff to maintain their entire dog park system. This is based on the following averages as determined from the Best Practices Survey:
 - Small dog parks – On average the communities surveyed had 8 developed parks and 1 natural park per community. These parks were an average of 0.57 acres in size with an average 6 mile service area radius and were the easiest to maintain.
 - Medium-sized dog parks – On average the communities surveyed had 7.25 developed parks and 1.5 natural parks per community. These parks were an average of 3.97 acres in size with an average 5.83 service area radius.

- Large dog parks – On average the communities surveyed had 1.5 developed parks and 2 natural parks per community. These parks were an average of 30.83 acres in size.

2.3.6 Policies, Regulations, and Enforcement

Because enforcement ranked high as an issue with the public and stakeholders, each surveyed community was asked how they enforced regulations, rules, and policies for off-leash facilities and who was responsible for the enforcement. Their responses indicated that the agencies responsible for enforcing rules varied from local police to animal services/control officers to park rangers.

Following are some of the common regulations / rules employed by the responding communities to govern dog park usage.

- Dog owners are required to remove all waste.
- Dog owners are required to have voice control over their dog(s).
- Dog owners are required to always keep their dog(s) in sight.
- Dog owners are required to be present at all times.
- No smoking, alcohol, or food is allowed in the dog park.
- No pet grooming is allowed.
- A minimum age for dog handlers is required.
- Full immunizations of dogs are required.
- Dogs in heat are not allowed.
- A maximum number of dogs per owner/handler is established.
- Dogs must be healthy.
- Dogs must be spayed/neutered.
- Dogs must display a current license.
- Dogs showing any signs of aggression must leave the park.
- Dogs must be on a leash to and from the park access points.

3.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of the public participation process was to provide opportunities for county residents to share their values, issues, desires, and concerns as it related to the development of new off-leash dog parks within the county. These input opportunities included:

- Three public meetings/open houses
- Three Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) meetings
- A public meeting survey
- Comment sheets
- Information postings on the County's website
- Direct emails to/from County staff.

Following is a summary of the meetings and major findings that were important to the development of the Dog Park Master Plan (DPMP).

3.2 Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC)

Three SAC meetings were conducted at strategic milestones during the planning process to provide opportunities for stakeholder input, discussion of issues, and comments in relation to the development of the DPMP. The SAC participants were selected by County staff and included representatives from the following groups/agencies.

- City of Draper
- City of Midvale
- City of Riverton
- City of Sandy
- City of South Jordan
- City of Taylorsville
- City of West Jordan
- City of West Valley City
- Salt Lake City (Parks Department and City Council)
- Salt Lake County Animal Services
- Salt Lake County Mayor's Office
- Tree Utah
- Great Salt Lakekeeper
- PRATT Coalition
- FIDOS
- Interested Citizens

3.2.1 SAC Meeting No. 1

The first SAC meeting was held on March 28, 2007, at the Salt Lake County Government Center, Conference Room S4017. The purpose of this first meeting included the following:

- Introduce the project and its purpose
- Review the public's input from the first public meeting
- Review the BPS form and gain input for any modifications
- Present the results of the existing Salt Lake Valley off-leash dog park evaluations
- Review the preliminary findings of the "dog park issues" research
- Solicit additional values, issues, desires, concerns, and relevant information from the stakeholders

3.2.2 SAC Meeting No. 2

The second SAC meeting was held on May 23, 2007, at the Salt Lake County Government Center, Conference Room S-1002. The purpose of the second meeting included the following:

- Present the results of the Best Practices Survey (BPS)
- Review additional "dog park issues" research
- Review the preliminary planning and design criteria recommendations
- Review the alternative levels of service analysis maps
- Receive comments and suggestions on the information presented

3.2.3 SAC Meeting No. 3

The third SAC meeting was held on November 28, 2007, at the Salt Lake County Government Center, Conference Room S-1002. Prior to the meeting, stakeholders were given the opportunity to review the Working Draft of the DPMP report. The purpose of the third meeting was to receive comments and suggestions on the information provided in the Working Draft of the DPMP report relating to the criteria and standards for developing new off-leash dog parks.

3.3 Public Meetings/Open-Houses

Three public meetings/open houses were conducted to obtain input from the general public regarding issues, concerns, and interests in the planning, designing, and operating of off-leash dog parks within the county. The first public meeting was held on March 14, 2007, at the Salt Lake County Equestrian Park in South Jordan; and the second meeting was held on March 15, 2007, at the Salt Lake County Government Center, North Atrium in Salt Lake City. Approximately 28 and 78 residents attended these meetings, respectively.

Both public meetings began with a welcome and introduction of the project team. The objective of these meetings was threefold:

- To introduce the project, its purpose and process, the schedule, and the County and consultant team members
- To receive input from the participants on their values, issues, needs, and concerns of existing off-leash dog park facilities within the county
- To identify needs and desires for the types of activities and areas for future off-leash dog park facilities the County should provide for its residents

The third public meeting was an open house format and was held on February 20, 2008, at the Salt Lake County Government Center, North Atrium in Salt Lake City. The purpose of the open house was to allow residents to review specific information developed during the planning process at their own pace, ask questions, and provide comments on the Preliminary DPMP criteria and standards. Approximately 45 residents attended the open house.

3.4 Summary of Public Input

A comment sheet and meeting survey were provided at each of the public meetings/open houses and posted on the County's website to give the public an additional opportunity to provide input. A total of 65 written responses were received from the public. Following is a summary of the meeting survey key findings as they relate to the total percentage of respondents.

3.4.1 *Desired Level of Service*

- Willing to travel 1-5 miles 96%
- Willing to travel less than 1 mile 79%
- Willing to travel 6-15 miles 50%
- Willing to travel more than 15 miles 18%

3.4.2 *Desired Type of Dog Park Settings/Facilities*

- Natural landscape areas 80%
- Varied/sloping terrain 72%
- Developed stand-alone fenced area 63%
- Developed fenced area within a larger park 47%

3.4.3 *Desired Dog Park Amenities*

- Trash receptacles 98%
- Pet drinking fountain/hose-bib 89%
- Shade trees 87%
- Separated large and small dog areas 82%
- Natural water play areas 78%
- Open grass surface areas 76%
- Secure fencing 74%
- Ramadas 74%
- Benches 64%
- Dog wash-off station 58%
- Pathway/Security lighting 57%
- People drinking fountain 52%
- Landscape plantings 35%
- Agility play features 35%

4.0 PARK TYPES

4.1 Introduction

Off-leash dog parks are defined by their service area, size, and function. Service area refers to the population area measured by a mile-radius generally served by a specific type of dog park. The typical service area and size for each type of dog park was derived from the benchmark averages of the Best Practices Survey results. A prototypical design for each type of dog park is provided in *Section 6.3, Prototypical Off-Leash Dog Park Designs*.

4.2 Off-Leash Dog Park Classifications

For the purpose of this DPMP, dog parks are categorized by their size and function as shown in *Table 4.1, Off-Leash Dog Park Classifications* below.

Table 4.1 Off-Leash Dog Park Classifications

Dog Park Type	Desirable Size	Service Area
Regional (Large)	> 10 Acres	Countywide
Community (Medium)	2-10 Acres	5-Mile Radius
Neighborhood (Small)	1/2 - 2 Acres	Up to a 2-Mile Radius

4.2.1 Regional Dog Parks (Large)

Regional off-leash dog parks are intended to be larger than 10 acres in size and have a countywide service area. They are generally located in natural, unfenced, open space areas. However, they may also be located within large multi-use parks if there is sufficient area and user conflicts are minimized. Care must be taken when choosing sites for regional dog parks, to mitigate potential negative impacts in highly sensitive areas such as wetlands, riparian areas, high value habitat areas, and protected water-sheds.

Regional dog parks located in natural areas may have fewer amenities than medium- and small-sized dog parks due to their remote location and/or undeveloped nature. Common amenities may include, but are not limited to: looping unpaved or paved trails (i.e., native soil, gravel, or paved surfacing), gravel or paved parking areas, dog waste dispensers, trash receptacles, regulatory signage, and restrooms and drinking fountains (if feasible).

4.2.2 Community Dog Parks (Medium)

Community off-leash dog parks generally range in size from 2 to 10 acres. They are intended to serve multiple municipal jurisdictions and have a service radius of approximately 5 miles.

Community dog parks are typically fully fenced for control and safety, and are internally divided by fencing to allow for separate large and small dog activity areas. The separately fenced areas also allow for the rotation or resting of areas if required for ongoing maintenance operations. These medium-sized dog parks generally receive heavy use and may contain the following amenities: perimeter fencing, double gated entryways, paved paths, drinking fountains for people and dogs, waste bag dispensers, trash receptacles, shade structures, paved parking, benches, restrooms, and regulatory signage.

When possible, it is encouraged that community dog parks be developed to have three separately fenced areas. This would include one large area that should be surfaced with quick

growing, fast-healing turf grass that can withstand the most wear and tear; a second large area that should be surfaced with a non-organic granular material such as decomposed granite (1/2" minus or smaller), and a third smaller area that may be surfaced with turf grass or a non-organic granular material.

4.2.3 Neighborhood Dog Parks (Small)

Neighborhood off-leash dog parks are generally 1/2 to 2 acres in size and serve one or more neighborhood areas. They are fully fenced for control and safety and generally contain the following amenities: perimeter fencing, double gated entryways, paved paths, drinking fountains for people and dogs, waste bag dispensers, trash receptacles, benches, and regulatory signage.

The County's primary concern is for the development of medium and large dog parks, because larger dog parks serve multiple jurisdictions and more people than the smaller dog parks. Planning, design, and construction of neighborhood dog parks should be the responsibility of individual municipalities.

5.0 SITE SELECTION

5.1 Site Selection Criteria

5.1.1 Proximity to Other Dog Parks

Proximity to other dog parks is directly related to the service area identified in *Section 4.0, Park Types*. The intent is to locate new community dog parks without significant overlapping of service areas in order to maximize available resources. However, the service area identified for each type of dog park is a guideline for locating new facilities and may be adjusted according to the level of demand and availability of land and resources in a given area. For example:

- Due to the amount and type of land desired for regional and community dog parks, locations may be limited to where the land and resources are available.
- Regional dog park service areas overlap community and neighborhood dog park service areas since they have a countywide service area and provide a different type of off-leash experience for users.
- Neighborhood dog parks could be built anywhere a municipality determines a need exists and resources are available.

5.1.2 Adjacent Land Use Compatibility

Research and public input has identified both real and perceived concerns related to adjacent land use compatibilities of off-leash facilities. Most issues and concerns identified (e.g., noise level of barking dogs, smell of dog waste, etc.) arise when the adjacent land use is residential. Dog parks should be located to minimize conflicts with existing and/or planned land uses.

Regional dog parks are generally located on quasi-public land with other compatible uses or in natural areas and serve as a countywide destination. They may be compatibly located within or adjacent to sensitive natural areas, however, measures should be taken to prevent or minimize any potential negative impacts prior to designating the area for off-leash usage.

Community and neighborhood dog parks may be located within other recreational areas, however due to the limited amount of parklands available today; off-leash facilities should be balanced with the demands of other recreation and parkland users. Care must also be taken to insure compatibility with other recreational uses.

Compatible adjacent land uses that also provide opportunities for shared resources (e.g., parking, vehicular and pedestrian access, utility sources, restrooms, security) may include:

- Municipal or county facilities
- Animal oriented non-profit facilities (i.e., Humane Societies, no-kill shelters)
- Commercial or industrial development

5.1.3 Environmental Considerations

When a natural area is being considered for a large regional dog park, the area should be analyzed to determine if there are any environmentally sensitive lands such as wetlands, riparian areas, high valued habitat, or protected watersheds within the area prior to it being designated an off-leash facility. Preference should be given to sites that are not environmentally sensitive, but if a regional dog park is located on land that contains any environmentally sensitive areas, the following measures should be undertaken to minimize potential impacts from off-leash activities.

- Construct trails, paths, and amenities away from sensitive areas.
- Place barriers and buffer zones to protect sensitive and highly erodible areas.
- Provide sustainable controlled access points to natural water elements (e.g., creeks, ponds).
- Consider seasonal suspensions of off-leash activities to allow wildlife to nest, breed, and rear their young.

Each potential site must be analyzed on a case-by-case basis prior to determining its feasibility for being an off-leash facility.

5.1.4 Vehicular and Pedestrian Access

The desired level of vehicular and pedestrian access varies according to the dog park's type, location, and adjacent land uses. Dog parks should be located as community amenities that are easily accessed by their intended users. For example:

- Community dog parks may have designated or shared parking with adjacent uses as well as good path and trail linkages to encourage both walking and driving to, depending on the proximity to residential development. Sufficient parking should be provided to minimize overflow parking in adjacent residential areas.
- Regional dog parks function more as a destination and may be located in remote areas. These large dog parks should have good vehicular access and a limited amount of parking, much like a trailhead. Pedestrian access may be limited to the on-site path/trail system and connecting regional trails.
- Neighborhood dog parks may have few to no parking spaces if surrounded by residential development and designed to be "walk to" only parks with good neighborhood path and trail linkages.

5.1.5 Visibility

The desired level of visibility of a dog park also varies according to its type, location, and adjacent land uses. In general, the goal is to design dog parks in a manner that they are highly visible from passersby, adjacent users, and the community in general. Techniques for increasing good visibility include:

- Locating dog parks adjacent to roadways and streets
- Locating dog parks that can be seen from other uses (e.g., residences, commercial/public buildings, transportation or path and trail corridors)
- Designing dog parks to meet Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) criteria
- Providing street signage and site or trailhead lighting for added security and extended hours of usage

5.1.6 Site Infrastructure

The amount of infrastructure required for dog park development depends on the type of amenities desired by the users. Due to the nature and intent of small- and medium-sized dog parks, they are typically located where existing land use development has already provided roads, streets, water and sewer mains, and other utilities. Regional dog parks generally do not have convenient, available infrastructure except for roadway or street access. Whenever possible, dog parks should be located where required infrastructure already exists.

5.2 Locating New Dog Parks

5.2.1 Dog Park Distribution

Determining the desired approximate location of new dog parks was based on plotting the service areas of the existing dog parks within Salt Lake County, and then identifying areas that are currently underserved. Based on the medium community dog park service area of a 5-mile radius, established in *Section 4.0, Park Types*, potential locations for new dog parks were identified. Recognizing that limited land availability in currently developed areas prevents some areas from meeting these service level standards, new dog parks should be located in areas that are being developed.

5.2.2 Dog Park Location Recommendations

The majority of existing dog parks are located east of I-15 and north of I-80, which provides many overlapping service areas within the northeastern portion of Salt Lake County. Other existing and planned municipal dog parks are serving portions of Taylorsville, Sandy, and West Jordan, which leaves the western area of the county currently underserved. In order to provide the desired level of service to residents in these areas, this DPMP recommends that new community dog parks be located in the northwestern and southwestern quadrants of the county. Existing, proposed, and future dog park service areas are illustrated on *Figure 1, Salt Lake County Off-Leash Dog Park Map*.

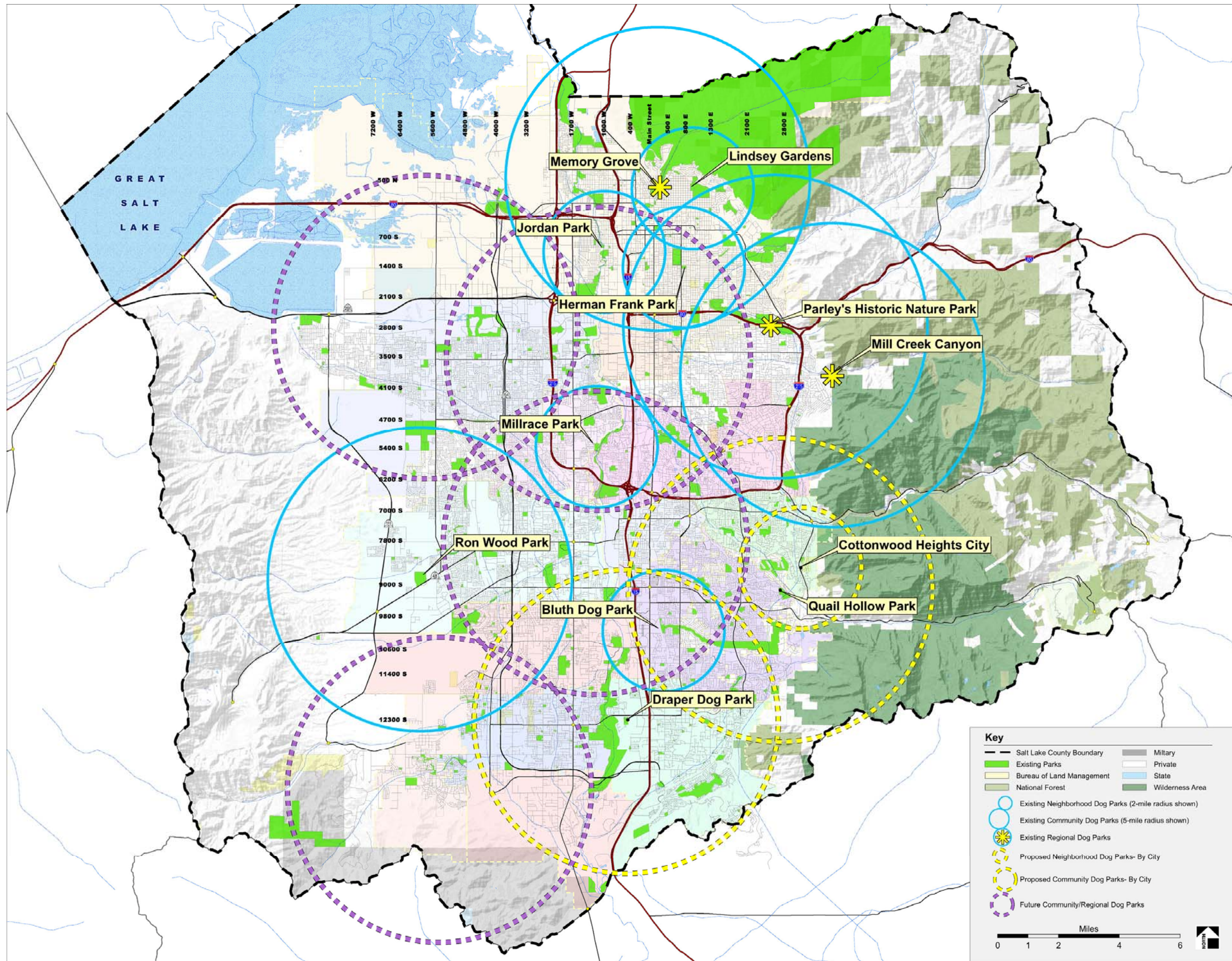


Figure 1. Salt Lake County Off-Leash Dog Park Map

6.0 DESIGN STANDARDS

6.1 Design Standards Summary Chart

Specific design features and amenities for the three different types of dog parks have been identified in *Table 6.1, Off-Leash Dog Park Design Standards*. These standards provide a guideline for what is recommended for each type of dog park and are not inclusive. Certain features and amenities listed may be expanded or eliminated based on site specific constraints and challenges or available resources. However, it should be noted that the majority of these items were identified to be the most desirable by dog park users and operators of successful dog parks.

Table 6.1 Off-Leash Dog Park Design Standards

AMENITY	DESIGN STANDARDS FOR EACH PARK TYPE		
	REGIONAL (Large) (Size Varies; County-Wide Service Area)	COMMUNITY (Medium) (2-10 Acres; 5 Mile Service Radius)	NEIGHBORHOOD (Small) (1/2-2 Acres; Variable Service Area)
Perimeter Fencing	optional	6' high commercial grade chain-link	6' high commercial grade chain-link
Internal Fencing	optional	3 separated areas: 2 areas for rotating use; 1 small dog area	optional; varies
Double-Gated Main Entryway	n / a	12'x12' min.; paved area	12'x12' min.; paved area
Maintenance Gate	optional if fenced	6' high commercial grade chain-link x 10' wide min.; sliding; 1 per fenced area	6' high commercial grade chain-link x 10' wide min.; sliding; 1 per fenced area
Surface Material	native soil generally; varies	both turf grass and non-organic areas	varies
Paved Pathway	optional; 10' wide	8'-10' wide; loop	8'-10' wide; loop
Unpaved Trail	10' wide; loop	n / a	n / a
People Drinking Fountain	optional	1 per park	1 per park
Dog Drinking Feature	optional	1 per fenced area	1 per fenced area
Water Quick Coupler	optional	1 every 150' radius in each fenced area	1 every 150' radius in each fenced area
Waste Bag Dispenser	at entry area; ¼ mile spacing max.	1 per acre min.; evenly space; near trash receptacles; at entryway	1 per acre min.; evenly spaced; near trash receptacles; at entryway
Trash Receptacle	at entry area; ¼ mile spacing max.	1 per acre min.; at entryway; not near benches or ramadas	1 per acre min.; at entryway; not near benches
Bench	Optional; 6'-8' w/back; along pathway	6'-8' long w/back; 3-4 per acre	6'-8' long w/back; 3-4 per acre

Table 6.1 Off-Leash Dog Park Design Standards (continued)

AMENITY	DESIGN STANDARDS FOR EACH PARK TYPE		
	REGIONAL (Large) (Size Varies; County-Wide Service Area)	COMMUNITY (Medium) (2-10 Acres; 5 Mile Service Radius)	NEIGHBORHOOD (Small) (1/2-2 Acres; Variable Service Area)
Shade Structure/Ramada	optional	1 per fenced area min; w/benches or tables	optional
Parking	varies based on site conditions	35 paved stalls min.	optional
Restroom	1 small size; at staging area; when possible	1 small size	n / a
Trees	optional	15 per acre min.	15 per acre min.
Regulatory/ Informational Signage	at staging area	at entryway	at entryway
Wash-Off Station	optional	optional; 12'x12' paved; hose-bib w/6' hose w/spray nozzle; 1 per park	optional

(See dog park descriptions for additional clarification.)

6.2 Design Elements

The following are further descriptions of some of the main design elements and site amenities summarized in *Table 6.1*.

- A 6-foot high perimeter fence with paved entryways to promote containment and safety of dogs, as well as to clearly define the off-leash activity area for enforcement of regulations
- Separate fenced areas for large and small dogs to segregate the dogs and to allow for use rotation to let surface materials rest
- A durable, long-wearing surface material of turf grass or non-organic granular material ½" minus or less is size
- A potable water source for human and dog drinking fountains, hose bibs, wash-off stations, cool down stations, maintenance activities, and irrigation systems
- Pre-manufactured drinking fountains with Hi-Lo bowls that meet ADA access for humans
- Spring activated hose-bibs for dog water and wash-off stations since pre-manufactured dog fountain bowls clog easily and tend to be a high maintenance item
- A designated unpaved trail system for regional dog parks to provide access to more remote areas within the park and to delineate where off-leash activities should be contained

6.3 Prototypical Off-Leash Dog Park Designs

Prototypical designs for each type of off-leash dog park are illustrated in *Figures 2 through 4* on pages 23-25. Each design illustrates optimal layout and locations for key design elements and amenities appropriate for each type of off-leash dog park. They are provided as a conceptual guide for designing successful off-leash dog parks, however each site and each community is unique and will require varying solutions based on specific site conditions and constraints.

6.3.1 Prototypical Regional Dog Park Plan (Large)

Figure 2, Prototypical Regional Dog Park Plan – includes a variety of design elements that combine a developed transition area between the parking area and the natural area - allowing for a wide range of off-leash activities. It illustrates controlled access areas to natural water features and protective barriers where trail alignments are in close proximity to environmentally sensitive areas.

6.3.2 Prototypical Community Dog Park Plan (Medium)

Figure 3, Prototypical Community Dog Park Plan – illustrates three separately fenced use areas: two of equal size for large dogs and one of a smaller size for small dogs. This allows the two large dog areas to be operated and managed as one large area or as two separate areas for ease of maintenance and surface regeneration. Perimeter landscape beds are optional but not recommended for shrubs, groundcovers, or perennials. Locating trees within the perimeter landscape area is best to minimize obstructions and shading of the turf areas. The recommended surface material for perimeter landscape beds is ½” minus decomposed granite to ensure long-term durability.

6.3.3 Prototypical Neighborhood Dog Park Plan (Small)

Figure 4, Prototypical Neighborhood Dog Park Plan – illustrates two separately fenced use areas: one area for large dogs and one smaller area for small dogs. This configuration may also assist in maintenance operations and surface regeneration by allowing both large and small dogs to use one area while the other rests. Perimeter landscape beds are optional but not recommended for shrubs, groundcovers, or perennials. Locating trees within the perimeter landscape area is best to minimize obstructions and shading of the turf areas. The recommended surface material for perimeter landscape beds is ½” minus decomposed granite to ensure long-term durability.

6.4 Typical Design Details

Typical design details for specific dog park elements and amenities are illustrated in *Figures 5 through 12* on pages 26-31. Each detail has been designed to best address common dog park issues and to minimize on-going maintenance and operation costs. They are provided as a conceptual guide and may need to be modified based on specific site conditions, constraints, and usage.

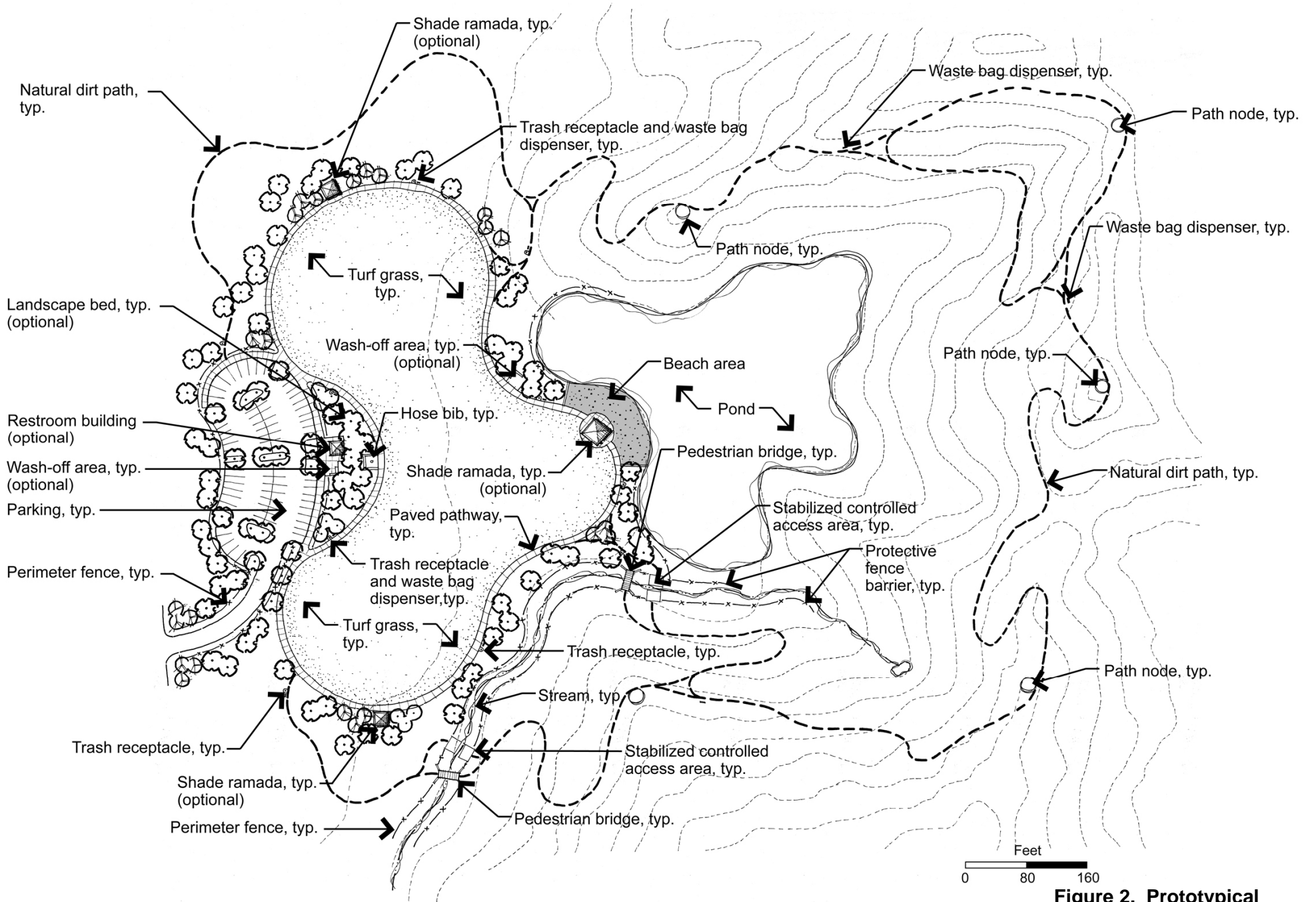
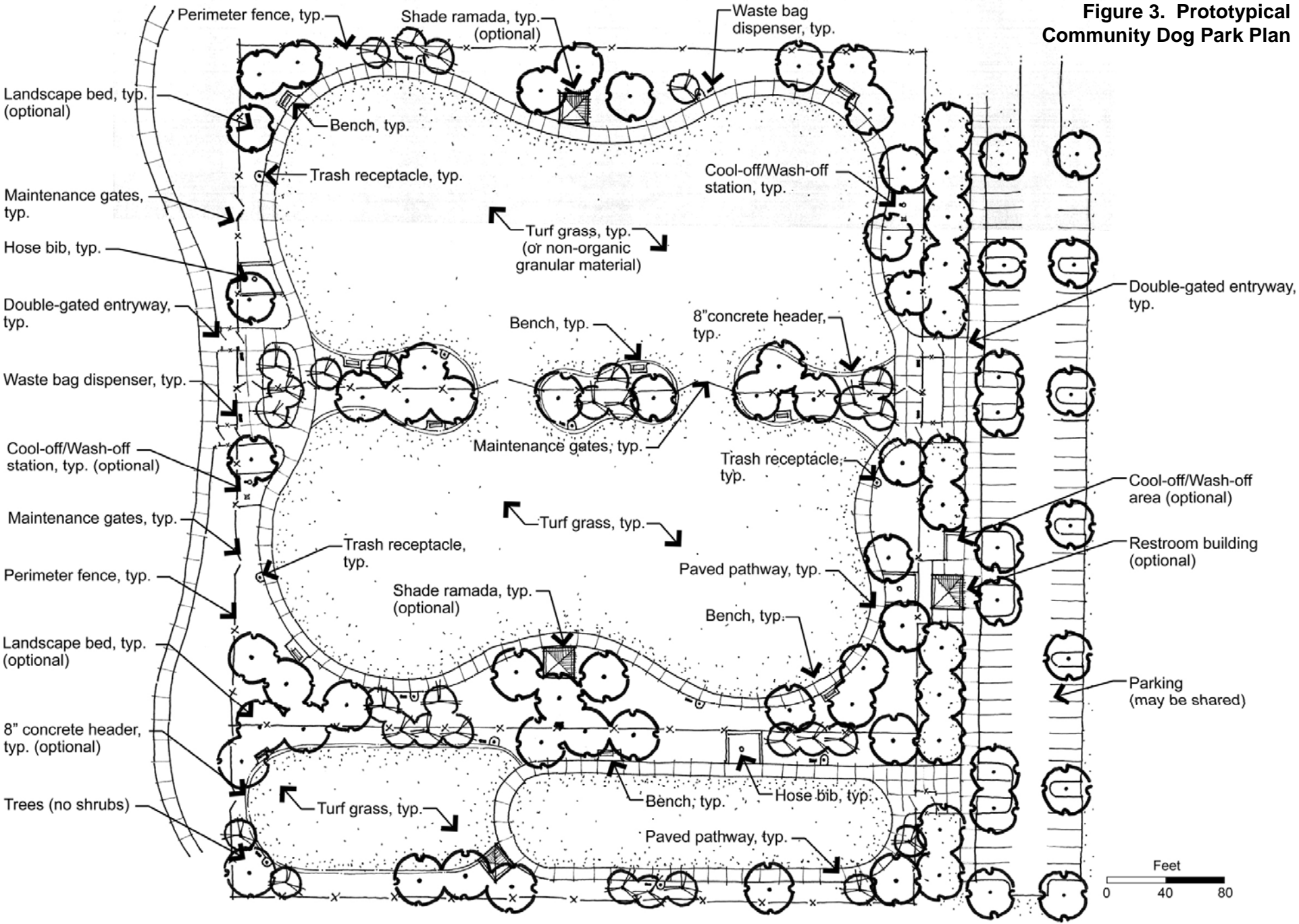


Figure 2. Prototypical Regional Dog Park Plan

Figure 3. Prototypical Community Dog Park Plan



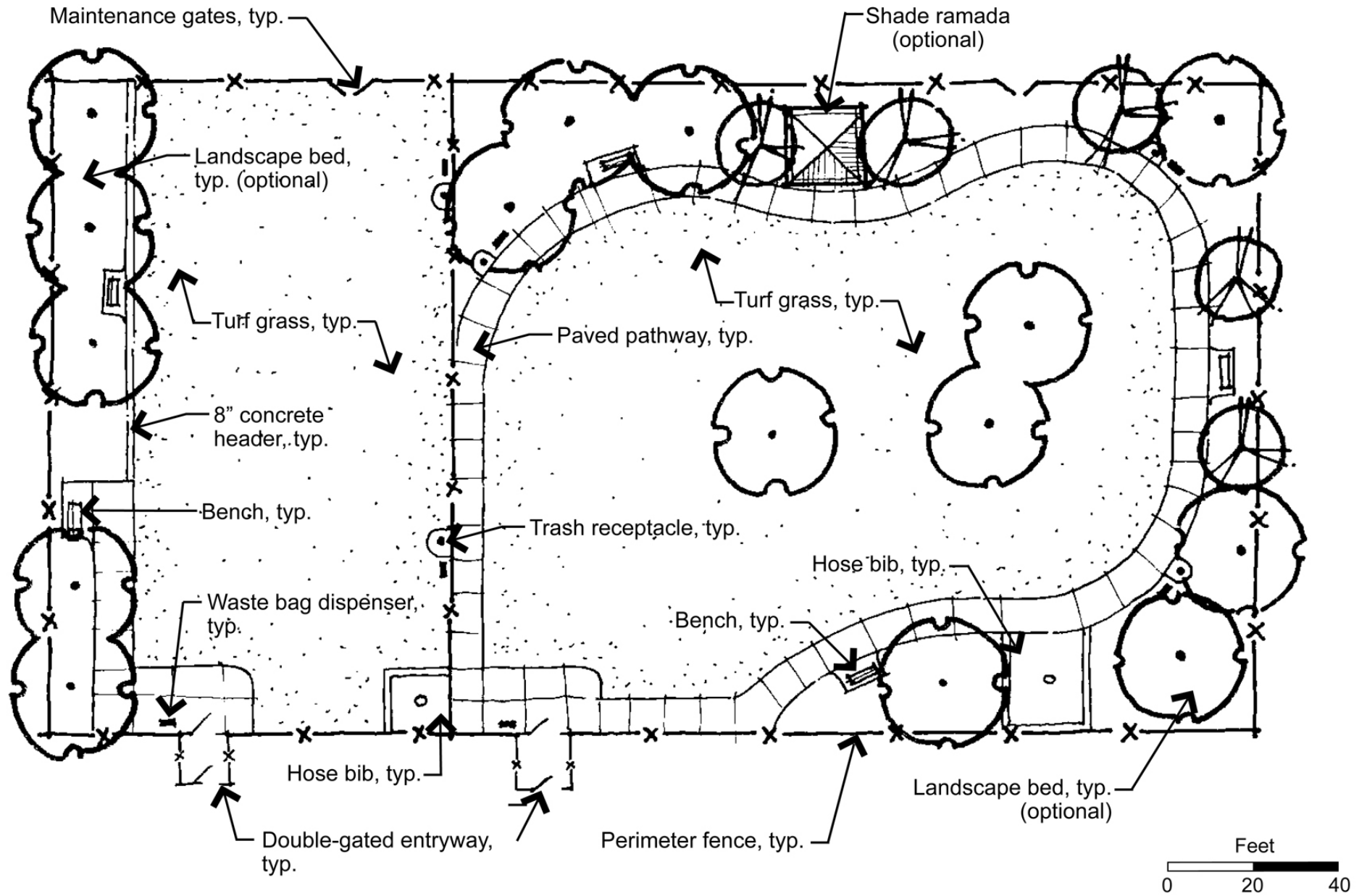


Figure 4. Prototypical Neighborhood Dog Park Plan

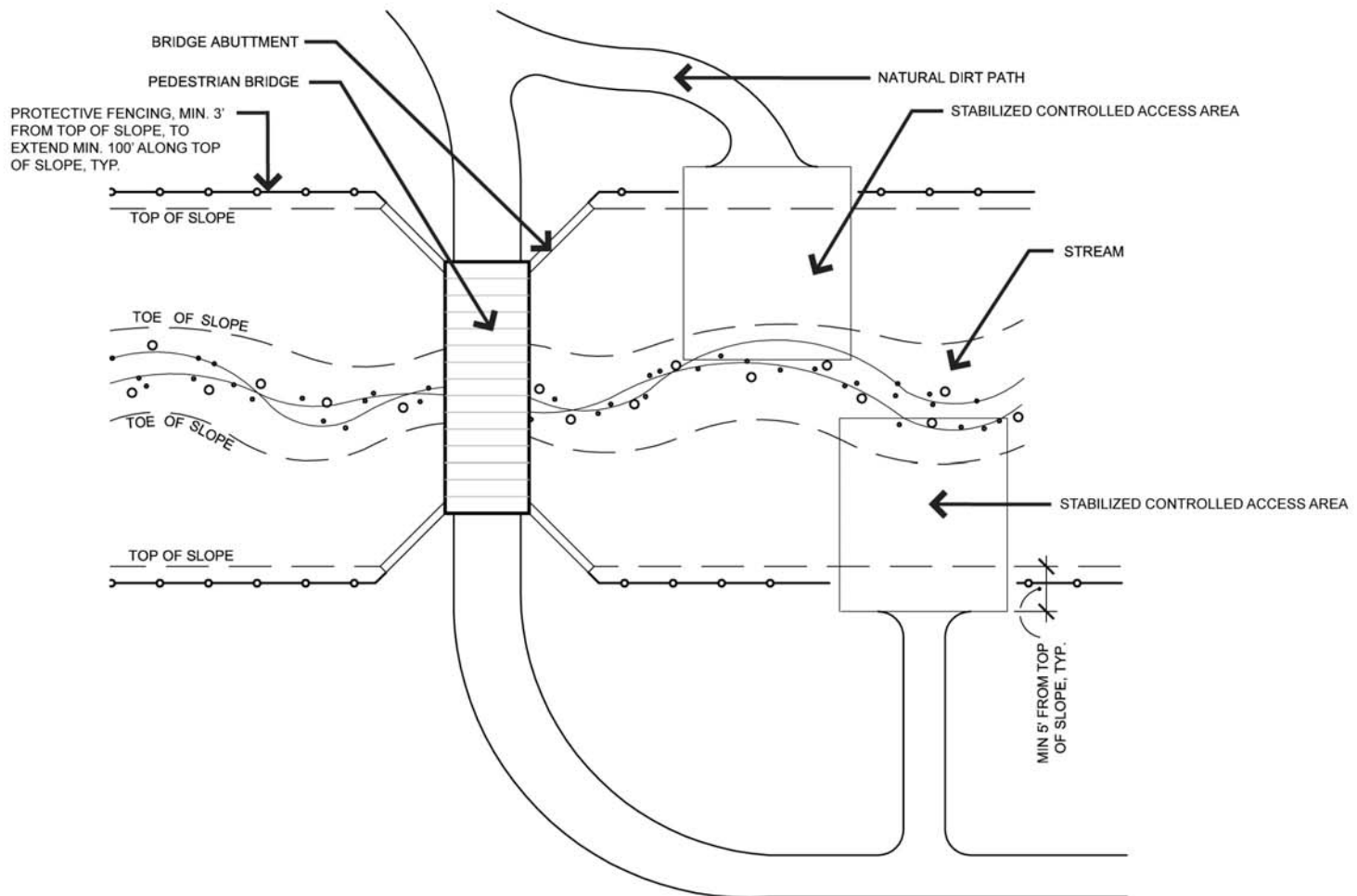


Figure 5.
Typical Stream Access Plan

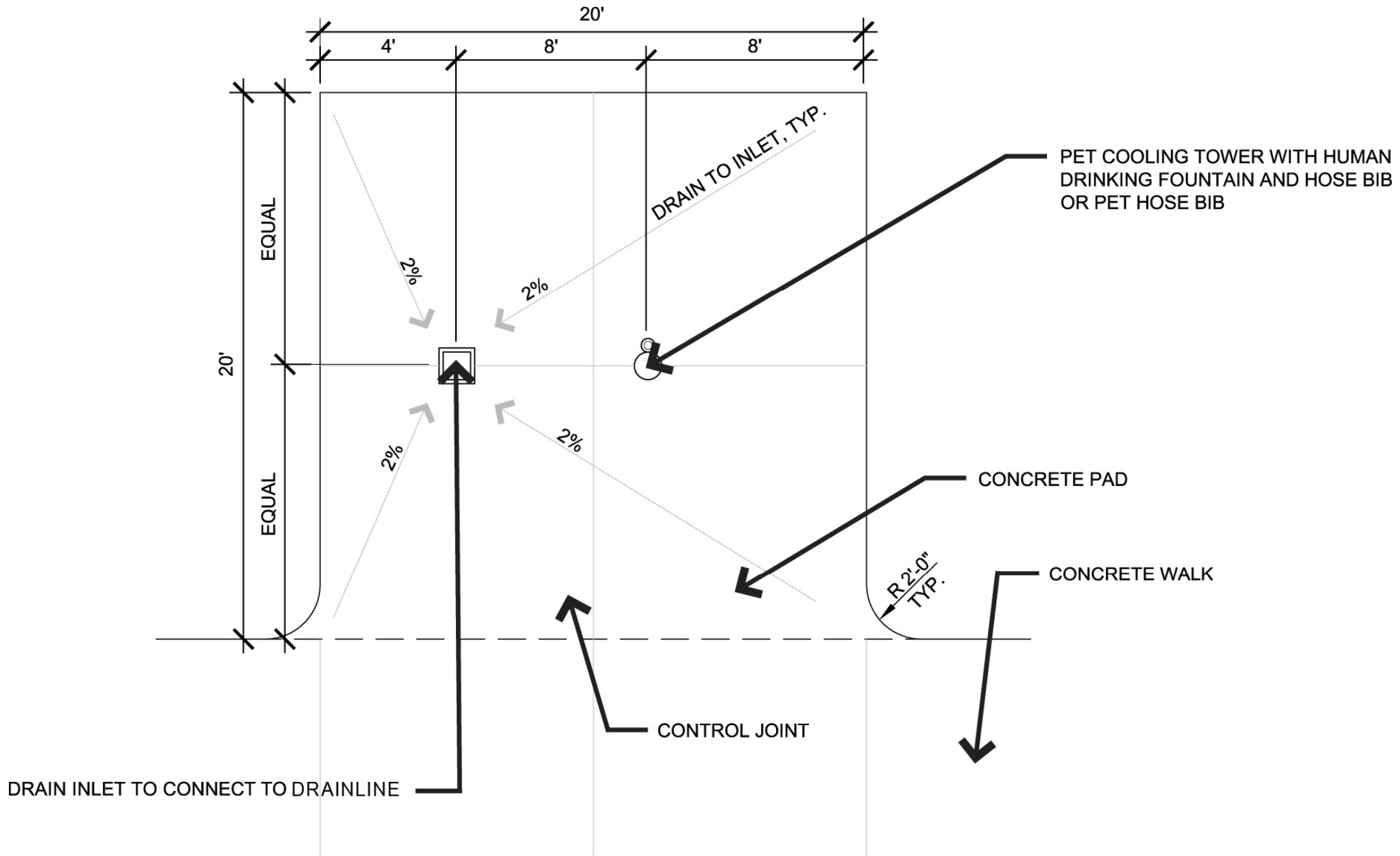


Figure 6.
Typical Hose Bib/Cool-Off/Wash-Off
Concrete Pad Detail

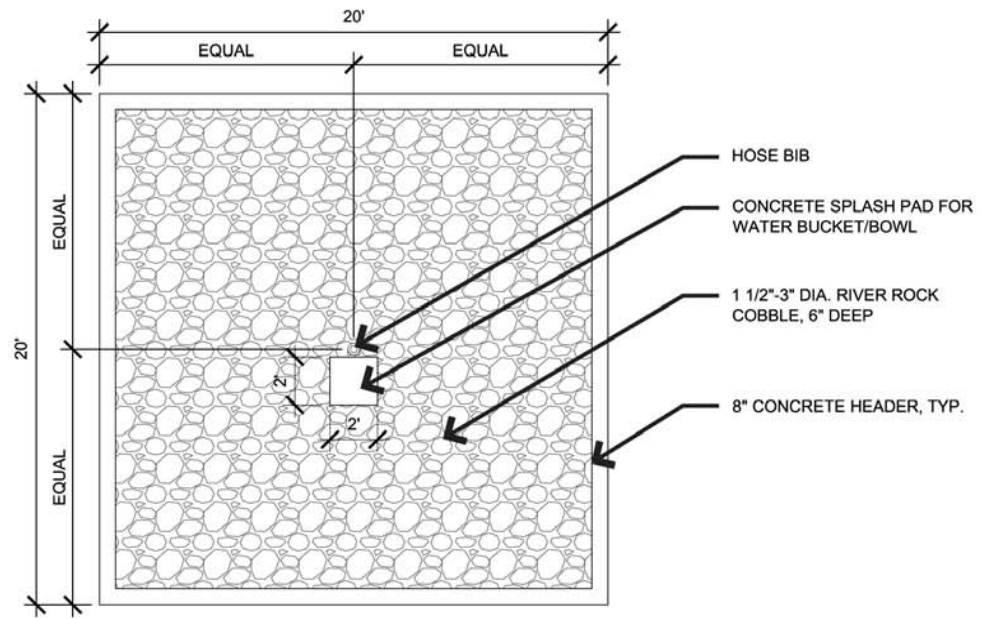
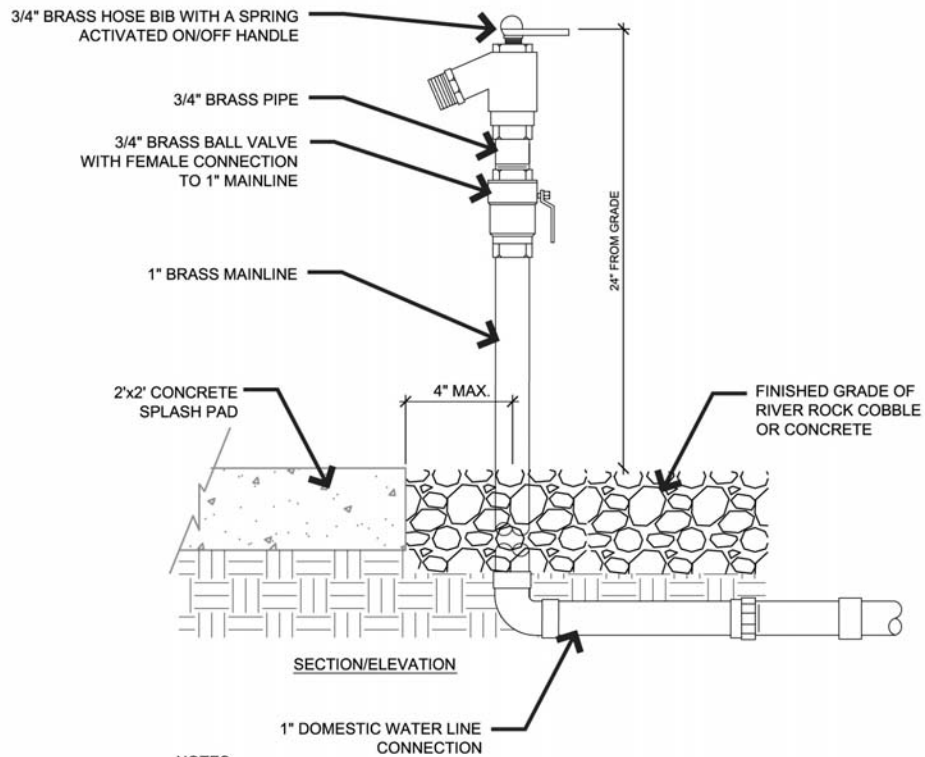


Figure 7.
Typical Hose Bib
River Cobble Plan Detail



NOTES:

THIS OPTION IS A MORE VIABLE SOLUTION FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

- COBBLE PROVIDES A MORE SUITABLE DRAINAGE SURFACE
- THE HOSE BIB DESIGN IS MORE FUNCTIONAL THAN A TYPICAL DRINKING FOUNTAIN ATTACHMENT THAT CAN GET CLOGGED WITH DEBRIS
- OWNERS CAN BRING A BUCKET TO PLACE UNDERNEATH HOSE BIB TO FILL WITH WATER FOR DOGS AND THEN DUMP THE EXCESS WATER INTO THE COBBLE

**Figure 8.
Typical Hose Bib Detail**

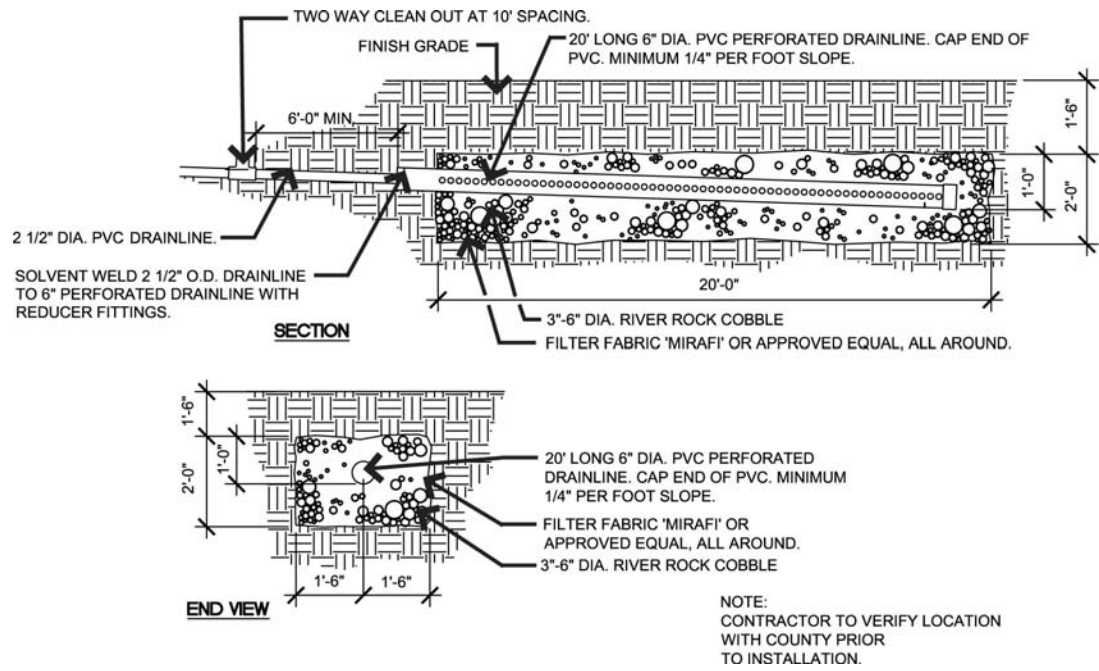


Figure 9.
Typical Drainline Detail

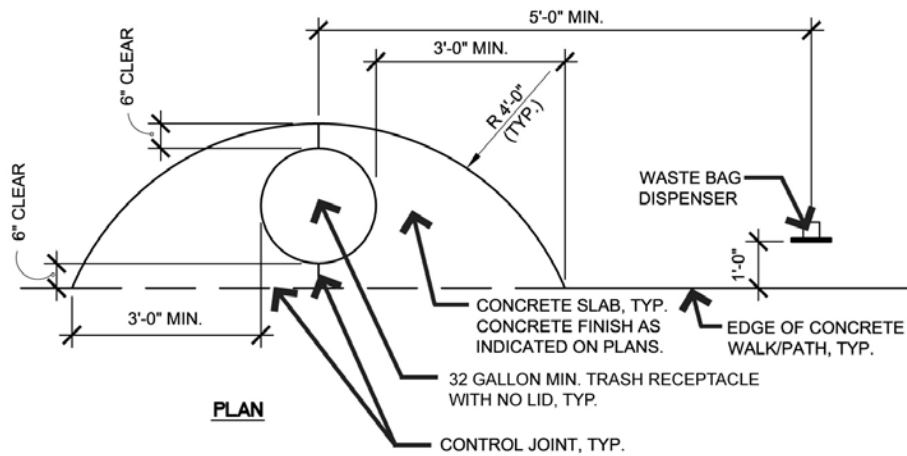


Figure 10. Typical Trash Receptacle Pad Detail

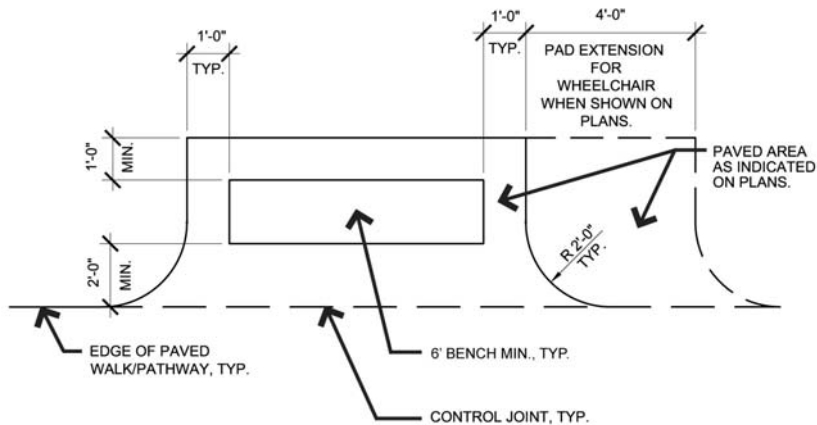


Figure 11. Typical Bench Pad Detail

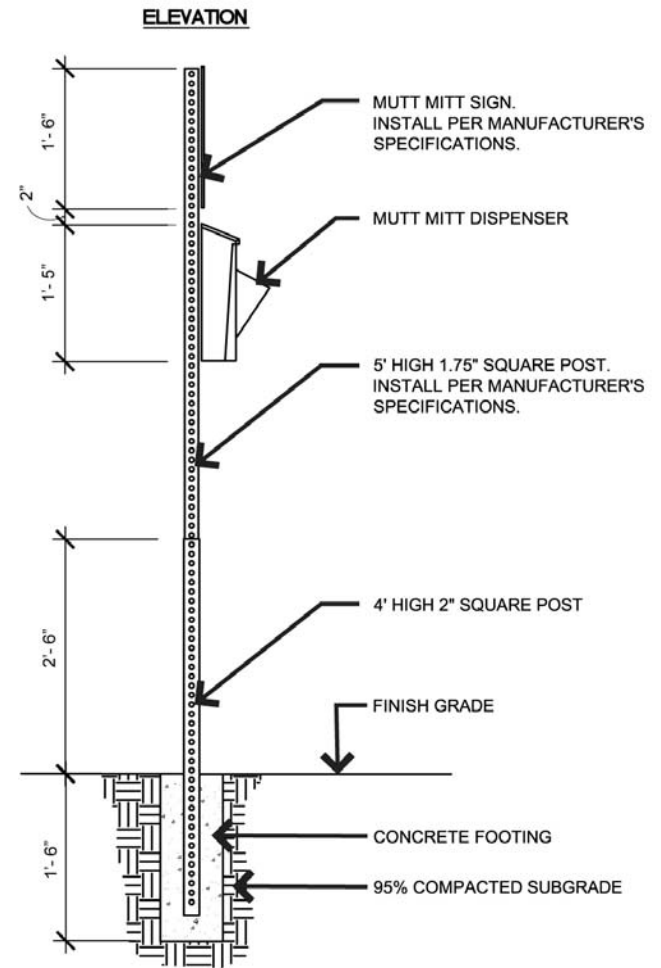


Figure 12. Typical Waste Bag Dispenser Detail

7.0 OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

7.1 Introduction

The long term operation of a successful dog park facility is dependent on two key factors: the maintenance of the park; and the policies and regulations that govern the park. Following are recommendations for maintenance; and policies and regulations based on research, public participation, and results from the best practices survey (BPS). These recommendations are not all inclusive and should evolve as the life of dog parks in Salt Lake County continues.

7.2 Maintenance

Dog parks are high maintenance facilities that require sufficient staffing and continuous upkeep. Surface materials, waste bag dispensers, and trash receptacles require the most attention and time. Recommended maintenance guidelines are:

- Regularly rotate turf areas to allow for rest and regeneration.
- Irrigate all parks with an automatic irrigation system.
- Regular turf maintenance is required, including regular aeration and fertilization, to maintain optimum turf health.
- Regular maintenance of alternative surface materials is required.
- Provide 1 full-time maintenance staff for every 2 dog parks in the system.
- Enlist and encourage the help of volunteer groups to assist with park operation and maintenance tasks.
- Consistently re-stock supply of trash receptacle liners and dog bag dispensers to ensure proper clean up and disposal of dog waste.

7.3 Policies and Regulations

7.3.1 Terminology

For the purposes of this DPMP, the term “Policy” will refer to the category of rules governing general behaviors such as respect and common courtesy. “Policies” are rules that do not carry the force of law.

In addition, the term “Regulation,” will refer to the category of rules that do carry the force of law and may carry the possibility of a civil or criminal citation for violation.

7.3.2 Existing Salt Lake County Policies and Regulations

Salt Lake County’s animal control regulations are similar to most other jurisdictions in the Salt Lake area and in the communities that responded to the BPS. In general, domestic animals must be under the control of their owners and/or handlers at all times. Physical restraint meets the control requirement in all cases, while verbal control that results in immediate physical restraint is acceptable in some circumstances, such as in designated off-leash dog park facilities.

Salt Lake County policies that are virtually universal among the BPS survey responding communities include that owners/handlers clean up their animals’ wastes; and that animals be prevented from fighting, harassing people, or otherwise disrupting the peace. The “Rules for Using the Off-Leash Area” posted on the County’s website also reaffirm the County regulations that require that all dogs must be properly vaccinated and licensed.

Title 8 of the Salt Lake County Code of Ordinances contains comprehensive regulations for the control of dogs and other animals, including prohibitions on allowing an “Animal at Large” which is defined as “...any animal, whether licensed or unlicensed, which is not under physical restraint imposed by the owner or handler...or is not capable of being immediately controlled by the owner or handler when off the premises of the owner.” Ordinance section 8.04.170 provides an exception to the Animal at Large prohibition “...when the director of health adopts rules and regulations, which are subsequently ratified by the Salt Lake County Council, which set forth the times and places where the dog or dogs may be allowed, with or without physical restraint, without compromising the health and safety of humans, causing a nuisance or damaging property. (Ord. 1480 § 5, 2001: Ord. 1473 (part), 2001: Ord. 1461 § 2 (part), 2000)” (Emphasis added). This ordinance provision specifically allows for designated off-leash dog parks.

The website for the Salt Lake County Department of Animal Services lists designated off-leash dog areas in Salt Lake City and Taylorsville, and provides the following “Rules for Using Off-Leash Area”:

- Pick up dog waste immediately
- Adhere to the boundaries of the off-leash site
- Have your dog arrive and depart the off-leash area on a leash
- Keep dogs under voice control and within your sight at all times
- Leash dogs showing aggression
- Display current license and vaccination tags on your dog’s collar
- Remember that you are responsible for your dog’s behavior.

It does not appear that the County’s Director of Health has formally adopted the foregoing as “rules and regulations” pursuant to the Title 8 exception that allows for off-leash areas, so it appears that the stated rules currently lack the force of law. Therefore they are treated like “policies” rather than “regulations.”

7.4 Standards Compliance and Enforcement Issues

A number of stakeholder and public comments expressed concern with the uniformity of standards for off-leash dog parks from park to park, and with a perceived lack of consistency in compliance with and enforcement of the standards. It is recommended that Salt Lake County adopt standards of behavior that apply to all off-leash dog park facilities in the County. Uniform standards support higher levels of compliance because dog park users know what is expected of them and their dogs wherever they go to exercise and recreate. Uniform standards also support better enforcement, because all enforcement officers and other personnel know what the standards are for all off-leash facilities.

Stakeholders also expressed a desire for enhanced compliance with dog park standards, emphasizing increased levels of enforcement activity. As with all compliance monitoring activities, animal control officers tend to concentrate on more serious violations such as animal attacks, habitual offenders, and public nuisances. Nuisance-level behavior standards of the kinds common at off-leash dog parks are frequently left to park users and neighbors for “peer-pressure” enforcement.

Stakeholders and the public offered a number of suggestions for improving dog park users’ compliance with off-leash standards. The most frequent suggestion was to increase the number of animal control officers on duty, and/or to post enforcement officers at each off-leash facility. That approach appears to be cost-prohibitive at this point, absent a newly

identified source of revenue to pay for the additional staffing that would be necessary. At the other end of the spectrum is compliance by peer pressure among off-leash dog park users. Many commenters expressed doubt that peer pressure, alone, would be sufficient to ensure compliance with posted off-leash park standards, and felt that something more would be needed.

7.4.1 Recommendations for Enforcement Policies and Regulations

As with most areas of law and rule enforcement, the overall objective is compliance with the adopted standards of behavior. The key components of high levels of compliance are:

- Public education and understanding of the standards and the reasons for them
- Peer pressure to comply with the standards to enhance everyone’s experience
- Regular enforcement of the standards in a manner that is seen as consistent and fair
- Potential closure for repeated violation of adopted standards of behavior. (similar to skate parks, this would increase the peer pressure concept)

Salt Lake County currently has authority to issue either criminal citations or civil notices of violation. Title 8 of the Salt Lake County ordinances provides that violation of any of the provisions of the Title may be prosecuted as misdemeanor criminal violations. Section 8.10.020 of Title 8 also allows for the issuance of a “Notice of Violation” (NOV) as an alternative to a criminal citation. Acceptance of a Notice of Violation in lieu of a criminal citation must be agreed to by the violator. The NOV states the nature of the violation, contains the consent of the violator to accept the NOV, and sets a date for compliance. The NOV may also be accompanied by administrative and/or processing fees to be paid by the violator. Currently, only a sworn peace officer or animal control officer may issue either a criminal citation or an NOV.

Given the County’s existing animal control regulations and enforcement procedures, it is recommended that Salt Lake County supplement its current list of off-leash dog park “Rules”, and categorize them into three levels of enforcement priority; criminal citations, notices of violation, and courtesy standards of conduct, as set forth in *Table 7.1, Recommended Off-Leash Dog Park Enforcement Policies and Regulations*, below.

Table 7.1 Recommended Off-Leash Dog Park Enforcement Policies and Regulations

	<i>Recommended Standard</i>	<i>Level of Violation</i>	<i>Enforcement Method</i>	<i>Maximum* Penalty</i>
1	Aggressive dogs not permitted (includes dogs that have previously attacked or bitten)	Criminal	Citation	\$1,000 fine, and/or 6 mos. Imprisonment*
2	Harassment of wildlife, and other animals	Criminal	Citation	Same as above
3	Harassment of park users	Criminal	Citation	Same as above
4	Owners are legally responsible for any injury/damage caused by dog	Criminal	Citation/NOV	Same as above
5	Dogs must be under the voice control of an adult at all times	Criminal	Citation/NOV	Same as above

Table 7.1 Recommended Off-Leash Dog Park Enforcement Policies and Regulations (continued)

	<i>Recommended Standard</i>	<i>Level of Violation</i>	<i>Enforcement Method</i>	<i>Maximum* Penalty</i>
6	Owner/handler must be in possession of a leash or other means of physical restraint at all times	Criminal	Citation/NOV	Same as above
7	Dogs shall not be left unattended at any time	Criminal	Citation/NOV	Same as above
8	All dogs must wear a collar and have current vaccinations and licenses visible	Criminal	Citation/NOV	Same as above
9	Owner/handler must obey all applicable recreation area rules such as parking, leash-laws, noise, nuisance, etc.	Criminal	Citation/NOV	Same as above
10	Professional dog trainers are not allowed to use off-leash dog park for training purposes	Civil	Infraction	\$750 fine*
11	Dogs under 4 months of age and females in heat are not allowed in dog park	Civil	Infraction	\$750 fine*
12	Owner/handler must remove and properly dispose of animal waste immediately	Civil	Infraction	\$750 fine*
13	Children under 12 years of age not allowed in off-leash dog park (OR Children under age 12 must be accompanied by and supervised by an adult a all times)	Civil	Infraction	\$750 fine*
14	A maximum of three dogs per private owner/handler allowed in dog park at one time	Civil	Infraction	\$750 fine*
15	No food allowed in the park	Civil	Infraction	\$750 fine*
16	No spiked collars	Civil	Infraction	\$750 fine*
17	No dog grooming allowed in the park	Civil	Infraction	\$750 fine*
18	Owner/handler must provide water for dog(s) if not otherwise available	Civil	Infraction	\$750 fine*
19	Respect wildlife habitat and the environment	Courtesy	None	None
20	In multi-use areas, respect other users	Courtesy	None	None
21	Yield the right-of-way to equestrians: Move off the trail as far as possible and keep your dog quiet	Courtesy	None	None
22	Yield the right-of-way to other trail users	Courtesy	None	None
23	Leave dog park facility in better condition than you found it	Courtesy	None	None

Table 7.1 Recommended Off-Leash Dog Park Enforcement Policies and Regulations (continued)

	<i>Recommended Standard</i>	<i>Level of Violation</i>	<i>Enforcement Method</i>	<i>Maximum* Penalty</i>
24	Permits are required for all commercial dog-walkers and private dog walkers with more than three dogs	Civil	Infraction	\$750 fine*
25	Commercial and private dog-walkers may walk no more than six dogs at one time	Civil	Infraction	\$750 fine*
26	Commercial dog walkers will be restricted to designated trails and areas within a dog park	Civil	Infraction	\$750 fine*

* These are the maximum penalties allowed by State Statute, and do not constitute recommendations of this DPMP.

A review of the existing County ordinances indicates that violation of polices and regulations 1 through 9 above, currently constitute criminal violations of Title 8 of the Salt Lake County Code of Ordinances, subject to reduction to civil NOVs at the discretion of the arresting officer. It is recommended that violations of polices and regulations 1 and 2 not be subject to reduction to NOV status because of the potential threats to public health and safety.

The violation of polices and regulations 10 through 23 does not currently appear to constitute violations of Title 8. It is recommended that the County’s Director of Health adopt policies and regulations 10 through 23 as “rules and regulations” pursuant to Section 8.04.170 of Title 8, and that the County Council ratify them. It is also recommended that violation of polices and regulations 10 through 23 be a civil infraction, subject to a penalty of \$50 for a first offense, \$100 for a second offense, and escalation to a Class B misdemeanor violation for subsequent offenses.

Polices and regulations 24 through 26 would apply to commercial dog-walkers, an activity that does not currently appear to be regulated under County ordinances. It is recommended that, if the County wishes to undertake regulation of commercial dog-walkers, it amend Section 8.03.010 of Title 8 to require licensure, and adopt Policies and regulations 24 through 26 as “rules and regulations” under Section 8.04.170.

7.5 Implementation of Enforcement Policies and Regulations

The simplest approach to implementing a new regulatory program or expanding an existing one is to hire or re-assign additional enforcement personnel for the program. Often, however, that solution is impractical for budgetary, personnel and other reasons. Given the three main components of high levels of rule compliance discussed above, the responsibilities for implementation of standards can be shared among the County and off-leash dog park users.

It is recommended that Salt Lake County consider the following measures to enhance compliance with adopted policies and regulations and share implementation responsibility, while economically managing available County resources:

- Post the adopted regulations prominently on the County website and at the entrances to all off-leash dog parks. This will promote greater park user understanding of the policies and regulations, and provides a clear basis for peer pressure to comply from other park users.

- Prominently post animal control officer contact phone numbers at all off-leash dog parks so that users can call in serious/habitual violations of park rules or animal control ordinances. This will encourage compliance with park rules by demonstrating that enforcement personnel are readily available to park users who are unhappy with user behavior.
- Encourage formation of off-leash dog park “sponsor” groups to assist in keeping the parks clean and maintained, to monitor park use for habitual offenders, and maintain communication with County Animal Services personnel. Such groups build a sense of ownership of public facilities and enhance the ability of park users to exert peer pressure on other park users.
- Establish a published fee forfeiture schedule for Infractions under section 8.10.20 of the County ordinances for selected off-leash dog park rules. This could reduce the administrative cost and complexity of taking enforcement action by offering an alternative to criminal prosecution. If this schedule is also posted at dog parks, it will inform users that there is a simpler, and therefore more likely, enforcement procedure than issuance of criminal citations.