

General Correspondence
PS-2020-02 Lease Free Implementation Plan

I cannot tell you how angry and disappointed I am this is happening, all because of a few whiners who bent ears and got their way.

Expect outrage from all the people who frequent this park. I've met so many people in my community, I never would have if it weren't for this park. Good job ruining a positive community place when this city is being destroyed by drugs and crime. this city is going down the tubes, fast.

Also wasting \$100,000, and more to dismantle it. Another waste alongside an inflated \$67 million useless library.

I usually dont get so political, but Council appears to be incompetent. Next election, I know who I WONT vote for.

Signed,

Stephany Reeves
Very Disappointed.

Hello there,

I'd like to start this off by saying I am a dog walker. I was 3 dogs Monday-Friday. Once a week I load the "Bromance Trio" up into my Escape and take them to Peter Miserskey Dog Park to run around for over an hour possibly even 2 hours. Did you know the closest "fully fenced in" dog park is in Acton? Or even Ancaster? Do not close this park. I park my vehicle on Watt St and walk over to the park with my trio. If parking is an issue put no parking signs up. I'm sure there won't be an issue with that. If it's the barking we'll too bad. I'm sorry dogs bark when they're excited same way children scream with filled with excitement when going to the park. I have attached a video of my "Bromance Trio" waiting to be taken out of my vehicle to go to the park. You have not only upset me the dog walker you've also upset Bruce the Labrador, Joey the German Shepherd mix, and Myles the Husky mix. Please reconsider the closure.

Sincerely,
Kaileigh Hilpert, Dog Walker

Hello,

I am writing in support of the dog park. I use the park pretty much every day and sometimes twice a day. My dog loves the park and we have met many many other wonderful pups and owners.

Do dogs bark, yes, of course they do! Do people park in a parking lot....again, yes, they do! All things that go along with living by a park. I live by a school and there

are some very loud kids, that yell and scream and even throw garbage in my yard. That is all part and parcel for living by a school.

I can't begin to voice how disappointed I am that the council not only gave in to a couple of habitual whiners, but to remove the park, leaving Guelph with NOTHING in its place, and the waste of taxpayer money is irresponsible and totally unacceptable.

Please reconsider and leave the park as it was built and as it's loved and very well used!

Sincerely

Cheryl Davidson and my dog Dexter.

Hello,

I am writing in regards to the fenced in dog park at Peter Misersky park.

I don't think it would be in the best interest for the city of Guelph to not have a dog park. This is near and dear to me as I have a five year old border collie/ German Shepherd cross. He is a very fast and active dog who loves his ball and loves playing with other dogs. For four years I was putting my furfriend into the car and travelling to Acton to let him run off the high energy he has. The downfall of this is my dog is not a fan of car rides. He gets high anxiety, drools constantly, and gets car sick.

I spoke with Mayor Cam Guthrie for the past few years as a citizen, and through friendly chatter about the possibility of Guelph having a fenced in dog park. Then after years of these conversations the announcement was made. I was so happy to hear Guelph was finally recognizing the needs of the furry citizens of this great town. I was elated to hear the first park was to open in the East end as that is the area in which I reside.

I waited with anticipation as the building of the fence started, took my furfriend for many walks to check the status of the park, and when It finally opened, we were there opening day and have been there every other day weather permitted. The amount of community who have brought their friends there felt incredible. Meeting other animal lovers-and human lovers, made me feel as if I was becoming more part of the community and getting to know my neighbors. Wether these people walked up from their homes, of drove from other parts of town, we all had the same reason to be there. A safe place for our beloved four legged family members.

I do understand that it was unfair to not get the opinions of the residents in that area, and I do sympathize with them. I myself as a very big dog lover enjoy seeing all the dogs walk by my house excited to get to the park, or Tuckered out from their play Tim, but it is much bigger than the residents that surround the park itself. I don't think closing the park outright is not in the best interest for this city. If need be keep this one open until you can find a relocated area. Perhaps the

eastview park as it has lots of fields and a beautiful trail to walk was well, and in all honesty is not very well known.

I think the money and resources that went into building the park, only to be closed 8 months after opening date is a huge waste of time and money and is not fair to the citizens who enjoyed it, whose taxes paid for it, and for the builders who worked very hard to complete it.

Please reconsider. With the amount of residential areas being built, is there ever going to be an accessible dog park realistically? Some where there is parking, not close to busy roads, and not upsetting neighbors?

I hope you guys reconsider and not just put into accounts of the negative in this, because unfortunately we live in a world now where negativity is listened to more than positivity.

Thank you very much,
Betty McEvoy and JD (aka the bow tie puppy)

* * *

I was floored to see tonight's vote to close the dog parks. No public input nor was this put out to the public. I was ok with the proposed mods but closing it wasting a ton of money and removing a great place for human and dog socialization is absurd. This was railroaded through so supporters could not voice their opinion.

Time to step back and respect all parties not just the 4 people who hate dogs.

Thank you.
Bob Herron

* * *

As a Guelph taxpayer, I am outraged by council's decision to close/cancel the fenced in dog parks after receiving complaints from a small handful of very vocal residents.

Guelph is far behind every other city in southern Ontario with respect to facilities for dog owners. Every other user group gets catered to, but dog owners are screwed over again and again. Most of the unfenced leash free areas are a joke and totally unsuitable.

I demand that council reconsider this unfortunate decision that was arrived at without any input from dog owners.

Uta Matthes

* * *

Hello

I sincerely hope you reconsider closing the dog park! One person causing an uproar Full of lies and total BS wins because he made enough noise? That's park isn't that loud ever when I have been there! It's a fantastic place for people to go and some energy out in a safe and controlled space! I am very disappointed that this is even being considered!

The only way I can get my Boston X Frenchies energy out is the fenced in park where he can run and play with other dogs! That park is NEVER that loud, one obnoxious person and that's it the dogs get punished and suffer because of a bunch of lies one person decided to spread around! I am seriously unimpressed with this vote!

Concerned dog Mom
Kayla Robinson

This is so short sighted

We need to find a solution so our pets have a place to run Why waste the \$\$\$ At least leave open until new sites can be found !

Not happy at all that we are not opening the other planned dog run area

Michael Stultz

Hello,

As a member of the Guelph community, dog owner, and resident of 35 Mountford dr, by Peter Misersky park, I urge you to not close the dog park. I attend every day often twice a day with my dog. The people that attend are courteous and abide by the new rules that have been imposed. Dogs are not in the park before dawn or after dusk. As a resident of the condo complex by the park I have no concerns about the dog park or the noise/traffic.

Thank you,
Megan Neely

I am concerned about Council's decision to cancel the dog parks and would like to share my perspective as executive director of the Guelph Family Health Team.

As a health care leader in this community, I see dog parks as places that promote active living and community connectivity, both of which enhance both physical and mental health. I find it difficult to understand decisions that do not seriously consider these factors given the clear priorities in Guelph's city plan.

I urge reconsideration of this decision and would be very happy to discuss.

Ross Kirkconnell

Hello,

I am a new resident of Guelph. I moved from Milton, where I had access to three dog parks within 20 minutes of my home. When we moved to Guelph, we were sad to find the only parks available were UNFENCED.

A few months after we arrived, the dog park at Peter Misersky opened. It has been wonderful to enjoy the open space with our yellow lab, who is very high energy and needs the social time with other friendly dogs.

\$100k of our community tax money was used to build this park. I agree the location is poor and that it may bother homeowners - however the decision to close immediately is not acceptable. The park should remain open until a new location is found and opened. Dogs are a big part of residents lives in Guelph.

Please consider my request.

Respectfully,
Christianne Gregory

Hello!

I've just read online that the only fenced in dog park in Guelph where we have been taking our dog every night since it opened is closing down. While that in itself is understandable (I know the residents weren't happy about it) the fact that all 3 planned dog parks are now being scrapped seems a little over the top. As a dog owner in a wonderful city like Guelph, I always respect leash laws, but I have a very energetic dog who needs to run free, and in a safe environment.

The fact that the only "off leash" dog park in Guelph is also beside a very busy highway is extremely unsafe, and while I am proud of my dogs training, she loves to run. In fact, she loves to run so much that she has taken off and actually run ACROSS the Hanlon, which I'm sure you can imagine was terrifying. Ive also helped other dog owners whose pups go off running into the forest by the "off leash" area and getting lost for hours in there. So while it's great that there is 1 off leash section in the entire city, taking away dogs opportunity to run off leash safely within our city is so disheartening.

I would politely, and with all friendliness but firmness in my heart, ask the city to reconsider their decision to take away all 3 planned dog parks.

Thank you so much!
Elona Love

* * *

To whom it may concern,

To spend \$100,000 on a fenced in dog park and then proceed to shut it down in less than 6 months of opening is irresponsible, impulsive, and causes us to stray farther away from the goal of a fenced in dog park in the city. Unfortunately not all of us have the ability to drive outside the city, we need a fenced in dog park in the city and unfortunately there's always going to be people saying "not in my backyard", this is similar for any big development. However, if not in your backyard then whose?

Citizens in Guelph need a fenced in dog park, it creates a safe space for the dogs and for the dog community (arguably safer than a non-fenced in dog friendly area). It's important for safely socializing and training to better our dogs.

My nonna lives down the road from the dog park (Corner of Cassino Ave and Hadati Rd) and has never complained about it, and as an old italian lady that does not see dogs as family members and wants nothing to do with them, that should say a lot. Don't let one or two grumpy locals ruin this for the whole dog community within the city. At least consider keeping this park open until another one in a more "suitable" location is opened.

Sincerely,
Olivia Gemin

* * *

Dear City Council,

As a neighbour of the park, 35 Mountford Drive, and a non dog owner I have no issues with the park. I've never had issues with parking and no complaints about the noise. Please don't listen to the few loud voices who are just bitter because they have to use their own parking space rather than have the convenience of city parking in front of their place. During the over five years I've lived in the condo development the only people I've seen use the city owned parking in front of the dog park are residence of the condo and their guests. Just because these people have had this convenience for years does not make them entitled to them indefinitely. While watching my children in the park I've enjoyed watching the dogs having fun. There are always going to be people complain, you can't please everyone. Change is hard, don't give up, stay strong and give the dogs a chance.

Farrah Trahan
Mountford condo resident for the dogs.

* * *

Hi there,

I recently found out that the Peter Misersky Dog Park will be closing. As I'm sure many others have pointed out, a fenced in dog park in the city is essential for our dogs to not only socialize but also get some exercise, in addition to the sense of community many owners have developed over the four short months the park has been open. I find it to be extremely irresponsible for council to cancel this project and others as a result of what appears to be misinformation and pressure from people who clearly just hate dogs. This decision has been extremely disappointing and I hope council reconsiders.

Regards,
Melissa Luna

I am very disturbed at cancellation of the plans for fenced in dog parks in the City of Guelph.

Please consider reversing this decision.

I am an owner of 2 dogs and there are not adequate facilities in the City for leash free opportunities.

What message are we sending if amenities like these are not provided to citizens? Do we want to become like Brampton? One can be in that cold and impersonal city for weeks with nary a dog in sight.

Thanks for your consideration
Terryanne Cassar

As a dog owner here in Guelph I am very disappointed by the recent decision to remove the fenced in dog park at Peter Misersky park and cancel the upcoming 2 other parks.

I regularly used the park (at least once a week, often 3 times) and my time there was likely the most time I spend outside on a regular basis. My dog thoroughly enjoys being off leash but I unfortunately do not have perfect recall with her which means I'm not willing to risk her running across a road as is a possibility at the other off leash facilities and areas in Guelph.

I will need to start driving to Cambridge to use their off leash fenced in parks again. The decision to have off leash parks in the city was a factor in my happiness to start roots here. My pup is a big part of my life and so although I will drive to another city to use their facilities this is unfair to their residents there as they pay for my recreational area, also bad for the environment as it is over a 1hr roundtrip drive and also a disappointment that instead of keeping the park open while other alternatives are found you have decided to cancel outright. The proposed size

reduction and hour reductions at the park seemed a reasonable compromise while other options were considered so I am perplexed why the council decided to go the route they did.

I did always believe that when the other 2 parks opened the amount of traffic at the one off leash fenced in park in Guelph would decrease which I believed would decrease the overall noise which as I understand it was a big part of the issues. I recognize that residents around the park were unhappy. Additionally I know myself and other dog owners were aware of the complaints and were actively trying to teach others that 'just letting your dog bark' was unacceptable which I believe was reducing the noise amounts slowly but effectively.

I truly hope you will focus efforts to either reconsider your decisions or at the very minimum learn from this experience and pick a new location for a fenced in park that can be transitioned quickly. Perhaps in a mostly industrial area where noise and conflict of space use would not be a factor as it turned out to be with the PM park.

Thanks for your consideration,
Peter Love
Disappointed Resident, Tax Payer & Voter

Guelph needs more dog parks, I can't stress this enough. As home of one of the world's top Veterinary Schools, you'd think Guelph would be pet friendly and make every effort for people and their pets to happily co exist. I know a few people have complained about Misersky park but it would be such a waste of money to tear it down!!! There has to be a happy medium without wasting money or ruining a great thing for people and their dogs.

Dawn Pederson

Hi there,

I, like many other pet owners, am astounded that the only fenced dog park in the area is going to be closed. Clearly the general public was not consulted on this and council only bothered to hear the opinion of those who do not want the park.

It is hard enough to own a dog in this city having only the one fully fenced area. People like me who have newly adopted rescue dogs/puppies rely on this park to train and exercise our dogs. Young dogs and rescue dogs need a place where they can safely run and be trained off-leash before they can be taken to an off leash park. These off leash parks are close to roads, sports fields, and have no fences. Dogs cannot be brought here to train because theres nothing to stop them from running away, running into traffic, or running and jumping on a pedestrian.

All dog owners want is a safe place for dogs to play and be trained to be well-behaved in public and council has voted to take that away. This vote is punishing responsible dog owners.

It is absolutely insane.

I speak for every dog owner in the city when I say that this was a horrible decision.

Do the responsible thing and reverse your decision.

Thank you,
Kyle Poland, a concerned and infuriated citizen

All 4 of us in my household want the dog park to stay open!!!!!!

Lyss Clarke

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing regarding the closing of Peter Misersky Dog Park.

I am shocked and saddened to hear this park will be closing and other fenced parks have been cancelled. I live in the Peter Misersky Park area and use that park almost daily along with so many other folks.

It's not just a dog park, it is a community hub where like minded folks can get together with their dogs and make friends and enjoy the outdoors together. It's a place where puppies learn socialization and off leash training. Without a fenced park how do we teach our new dogs to come when called and how to not run away in off leash parks? I am a dog mom to two rescues who I had to drive all the way to the much smaller town of Acton on a daily basis to train in a fenced in park because Guelph didn't offer one. Finally we get one and it is always well used. Dogs and dog parents are happily socializing. All dog related topics are discussed and debated. It's a great time for everyone. Now the city wants it shut down because a few people lied repeatedly to council.

The main issues were 1. parking which would have calmed down once the other parks opened, currently the entire city is driving to Peter Misersky Park. 2. Noise - occasionally there will be a dog who barks too much but since September I've experienced that only a 3 or 4 times, generally it is quiet. The children playing in the nearby playground or the soccer or baseball teams that use that park are much louder. 3. Smell- the dog poop reseptical is underground, unless you stick your nose right in it, there is zero smell. 4. Cost-. The money has been spent, the park is already built and used constantly. Is the city really prepared to throw all that money away? We as taxpayers are already taxed to much in this city, especially us

East Enders who still have next to no amenities, now you are just planning to flush our hard earned money down the toilet and take away one of the only things we have on the East side? It's disgraceful. To even consider removing this park now makes me think this entire council has lost it's mind. Something we will all remember come election time.

Please for the sake of the dogs, the pet parents and the tax payers, I beg you to keep Peter Misersky Dog Park open and plan better in the future.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Hannah
Potato and Benny🐾

Dog parks need to be walkable with trees and wooded areas. A squared fenced in area has several shortcomings:

- 1) there is nothing for the dogs to do but travel in packs and harass one another;
- 2) it terrifies the smaller dogs as a result;
- 3) there's excrement everywhere.

We take our dog to Margaret Greene - it's awesome. As a walkable path, we the owners get a walk in. The dogs frolic along the trails and into the bush - there's tons to smell and investigate. And there's no ganging up - they're not all just sitting in a cage staring at one another, wondering who to jump on.

Square fenced in grassed areas are super dumb. Do you have a dog? Come walk Margaret Greene and see for yourself.

Thanks
Brian Carwana

As a citizen with 2 dogs who frequent the park daily we vote to have the park remain open.

There is no where in this city for dogs to run free and play.

For all pet owners they are an extension of our families.

Closing parks for them is like taking parks from children because they are too loud.

Ridiculous.

Shame on council for even considering this!

Christa Massey

I'd like to voice my concerns over the proposed closure of Misersky Dog Park.

First off, this is disappointing at this dog park has been a resource we use several times a week. I know there was concerns of noise, especially after sunset. Ourselves and our neighbors have always been mindful of avoiding the park during late or dark hours and take care to always clean up after our dogs and dispose of their waste properly. Concerns such as waste being left or an overflowing waste bin were either one-offs, total exaggerations, or growing pains which are to be expected.

Secondly, to close the park only months after opening is truly an embarrassment. To apparently spend 100k developing the park which is now beloved by so many (humans and pups) and of course to spend even more on the tear down. What a colossal waste of our money.

This brings me to my final point. I really can appreciate neighboring residents concerns over noise. It seems all other concerns are just 'add ins'. The fact that this location was approved without any apparent thought as to the effect on the residents is bewildering. To hear Bob Bell quoted saying the effects on the residents 'never entered his mind' makes me wonder how much discussion was actually had for the initial proposal of this park and location. It makes me wonder if the councillors have never before met a dog, let alone considered what happens when you put 2-20+ together to play.

While this park may not be the absolute best location for the neighboring residents it should remain open until a suitable replacement is developed. The councillors may have made a mistake on this park but this is not the solution. Furthermore these councillors need to take their job a little more seriously and begin considering all possible factors when approving these items and spending hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars.

Thank you
Patrick P.

* * *

Hello, I have just come across information that the dog park that was literally just opened at the end of the summer is now being closed permanently??? As far as consulting residents that failed miserably but now to waste tax payers dollars by closing what cost over \$100,000 to build as well as the labour costs is ridiculous and it is the only off leash fenced dog park in all of Guelph where I can bring my small pug who is terrified of being around bigger dogs and loves to run openly which I cannot do at non fenced sports fields as there is always large dogs or people playing on the fields. How is closing the park going to solve any problems? Where is there going to be a new one to replace it? Sorry for the rant but I'm getting fed up with the lack of communication and services in general in this city. It's bad enough our street gets overlooked frequently for road maintenance especially in the winter but now this and the increase to the property taxes on top of this is making me want to move out of this city altogether.

Regards,
Fiora Di Giannantonio
Concerned Grange Hill East resident

I believe it is outrageous in today's society to have a city our size with no where to run your dog if you don't feel comfortable in an I fenced approved area such as an approved sports field. I k ow many that feel the need to drive to Cambridge or Kitchener to use the fenced in facilities. But once again this Cory bends to the will of the few loud voices whom are somehow inconvenienced and will be by anything we do. It's time to develop a solution to enjoy the outdoors with our furry family members. If this park is to close it should do so AT A TIME ANOTHER suitable fenced in park is opened. Not before leaving those who have enjoyed it yet again without a space!

Ben Kidd

Good Evening,

We would just like to send this e-mail in support of KEEPING the dog park at Peter Misersky Park. We have been going there since the day it opened and absolutely love it. It was a wonderful and much needed addition to our neighborhood. Everyone we met and interacted with was kind and happy to be there. It provides a much needed safe space for dogs. Everyone helped take care of the park, by keeping it clean or picking up after others. It was our space, so of course we will help keep it clean!

We hope that the city can give it a chance. If they take it away we are left with some off leash trails (which some people don't feel comfortable using) or sports fields, where we often get yelled at to take our dogs off the field.

So hear our plea to keep the park, for us and our furfriends.

Thank you,
Natalie Iacono, Chris Roach, and Winston the Cavapoo

Good evening,

I was browsing through Facebook when I saw a grim story on the Dogs of Guelph page.

My family and I waited a very long time for Peter Misersky dog park and it's a real shame that you're going to shut it down.

I was deeply saddened by the article. Losing the dog park would mean losing a loving, supportive community of dog owners who finally have a safe place to socialize their pups and let them get some much needed exercise.

I hope that you're not basing your decision off of the 'squeakiest wheel' - Mr. Farley. From the opening of the dog park, it was clear that Mr. Farley was desperate to get the park shut down at all costs. It seems that his MO is to wring his hands like a cartoon supervillain and mutter about how much he hates change in the neighborhood.

He is the real nuisance, if you ask me. I love to treat my pup to some fun in the park, but I am frequently deterred by the idea that the angry fool will be lurking in the wings. I've had nothing but lovely experiences in the dog park with the other visitors. I am always sure to clean up after my dog and if he gets overstimulated, I leash him and remove him from the park. Easy! Proper communication and/or bylaw enforcement could minimize the negative effects of the dog park in the neighbourhood, but let me tell you...

You can't stop unwanted noise in a neighbourhood. If I popped my head out of my front door right now, I'd probably hear signs of life. Maybe a neighbour is shovelling their driveway. Maybe some kids are playing on a homemade ice rink. Maybe - gasp! - a dog is barking in his yard.

I understand Mr. Farley may not be good with change, but that's the world we're living in. I hate the new stoplight on Eramosa that's about 100 steps away from another stoplight, but you don't see me flaring my nostrils about it to everyone who tries to cross there and making people feel unsafe about it.

I am deeply troubled by the comments made by council on the Guelph Today article. Comments indicate a lack of forethought. It is a true cop-out to say 'yes, well, we know better now' after you've made a \$100,000 investment. Surely you must be more careful with our tax dollars... right? Surely you aren't going around making 'spur of the moment' decisions?

It would be a waste to shut down such a lovely park that means so much to so many.

I hope you strongly consider leaving Peter Misersky Park open to all of the dog lovers of the city of Guelph.

but... you can take that stoplight away from Eramosa if you like. ;)

Thank you for reading my concerns.

Leslie Stewart

Hello there,

My name is David Schwan, and I am a lifetime resident of Guelph, Ontario. I saw Mayor Guthrie's tweet inviting the opinions of those who wish to share their's about the closure of the Peter Misersky dog park. I would like to begin by thanking Mayor Guthrie's invitation and the willingness for the council to listen to other opinions that rivals their own.

With this email, I'm hoping to present a counter-argument to the argument of the removal of the dog park at Peter Misersky Memorial Park. I will also be addressing the arguments that I've been provided with as to why the dog park is a problem, and to counter them, in the hopes that those whose decisions mean more than my own, who took these arguments seriously either choose to change their mind.

I noticed that a common individual in Mr. Saxon's articles on the subject was a man who resides in the condos, Mr. Farley.

I get that he was involved in the planning procedures and selling some of the homes, but what I wish that there was more understanding of the man's behaviour other than what he's done for the housing complex.

I will also add that these are arguments that I've been provided with and are my own experience. Obviously I am not part of the council that made the decision to abolish the dog park so I definitely will not rule out that he may have provided better ones to other parties.

I'll start with his original arguments. All four of which are factually incorrect and strike me as ones formulated out of desperation.

One of his initial arguments was that he lost his parking spot. Interestingly, the spot he was referring to was a public parking spot for people visiting the park. It was never "his spot", so he never lost a parking spot. There is a parking spot assigned to every individual housing unit in the complex. His just happens to be behind his front door, and he would rather park closer to his front door. Laziness shouldn't be a contributing factor towards city planning, or his argument.

Another argument he presented was that the property value shot down significantly with the addition of the park. I would counter that argument by saying that properties in Guelph have constantly been on the rise over the past few years. If his property value were to drop significantly, I would argue further that it would have much more to do with the housing market rather than an addition to a park.

If he's worried that his property value is on the decline or that it will be on the decline, why not sell high now? He wouldn't have to worry about losing money on it, and he certainly wouldn't have to worry about a dog park that he provides poor-constructed arguments against.

I'll admit that I don't know what Mr. Farley does for a living, but I will certainly argue that his argument that he wasn't consulted about the potential addition of a dog park also makes no sense. I don't have the Masters in Planning that he has, but I know that the city isn't obliged to consult the public about decisions such as a dog park. Just because he helped plan the condos/some other things, doesn't mean that he's the one that must be asked. To suggest otherwise screams a high level of arrogance.

And now my favourite argument. The noise complaint. What I don't buy into this is that we all chose to live next to a park. Kids play in parks. People bring their dogs to parks. Parks are for people to be outside. Noise happens outside.

I think that if he has a problem with the dogs making noise, then he also has to have a problem with the kids in the park, the soccer/ultimate frisbee players in the summer, and anyone else using the park. We may as well get rid of the park in general because of that if we're going with his logic about noise.

Arguments such as these tell me he doesn't have an actual argument. The fact that the city council took these terrible arguments seriously is vastly disappointing. Could it be that they're just annoyed at the headache that Mr. Farley has caused them since the opening of the park? I mean I don't blame you if that's part of it, but I would hope that my responses to incorrect arguments that HE PROVIDED help you guys realize that he's just giving nonsense reasons to abolish what many thought was a fantastic idea.

To add on to my critiques, I'll fill you guys in on more happenings due to Mr. Farley's irrational behaviour.

Furthermore, I've had multiple people tell me that this same man was following them around, swearing at them, and threatening them to not use the dog park. I'll list some examples off the top of my head.

Numerous occurrences of him going into the dog park and starting serious arguments with the people using the park, many of which I have seen, but not engaged in. I am one who's always up for a discussion or debate, but I find that the people he's started an argument with (at least during the times I've seen him) stand their ground well in a heated argument that they didn't even start. In the several that I've seen, Mr. Farley was actually the only one swearing, interestingly enough.

One woman said he was taking pictures of her and her friend in the dog park. Another mentioned that he followed her all the way to her home on Auden. She threatened to call the police if he didn't leave and under no circumstance should anyone be put in a situation like that. My colleague from work walks his dog at night and he claimed that a guy at the corner of the complex (Mr. Farley's unit) was out on his porch as he walked past and just started swearing at him and threatening him to not he entered the dog park. Why is this okay again? If someone could please enlighten me with a reason, aside from heated passion about

a topic that shouldn't be so heated, it'd be greatly appreciated. Even just a reason (because there isn't a good one) would suffice. Thanks in advance.

So with all that said, I'm sure you're tired of me going off about Mr. Farley and his behavior. About as tired as we are of his constant complaining I would imagine. I would hope that the information provided shines a light on the situation from a dog park user's standpoint when it has come to dealing with those against the dog park.

I'll spend the rest of this email explaining why I feel that removing that dog park isn't a good idea at all from a standpoint that isn't one looking at it from an-already negative point of view.

I mentioned above that I've been a lifetime resident of Guelph. I've always lived within a kilometre of Peter Misersky. I happen to know that it used to be a big spot for drug use, as for many years there was a picnic table in the middle of some shrubbery that hosted low-key bush party-esque gatherings, countless used needles, abandoned dirty underwear, the whole works.

I'll also never forget the day some high schoolers found a body hanging from one of the trees in the park. This park has seen some dark times, not to mention within the last year some hooligans burned down part of the brand new play structure. It's not as if this park is some haven that has absolutely zero negative behaviour happening in it. It's a park that (obviously not deliberately) can invite undesirable behaviour because it's so spacious. Dozens of nights I've looked out my window to see police cruisers driving through the park. What they were looking for I'm not sure, but I can't imagine it was a good thing.

The dog park is a way to bring activity to the park. It has brought members of the community together, and created friendships amongst people and dogs! Furthermore it has used space in a way that brings more people to the park, thus creating lesser space and capability for troubled individuals to use it as a place for inappropriate and/or illegal behaviour. And as mentioned above, it's easier to do that in a space encompassing a large area.

This park has a very sketchy history and there is indeed a stigma correlated with it. Whether that stigma is fair and/or outdated is certainly up for discussion, but abolishing something that hundreds of people have used since opening the gates in favour of much fewer individuals' preference is, in my eyes, counter-productive, and a poor way to show the community that the city is trying to implement stronger community ties. Peter Misersky Memorial Park needs this dog park, just as much as dogs and people need it.

I hope this email finds the right eyes and the appropriate measures are taken. Thank you for taking the time to read this, and I hope that minds are changed based on the arguments I've provided.

If anyone has any further questions about anything I presented, whether it be about the park, dogs or someone's behaviour, please do not hesitate to ask me via

email. This is a subject I'm ridiculously passionate about, as I would hope was made obvious by the length of my email.

Best Regards,
David Schwan

* * *

Hello,

I am a concerned citizen writing in regards to the potential closing of the dog parks. Guelph is a forward thinking city, with wonderful bylaws allowing many owners places at which to take their dogs. The fact that the currently wildly popular Peter Misersky park may be shut down and the future of the upcoming Bristol street park is in jeopardy is very disheartening.

I understand there has been uproar from the surrounding neighbourhoods in regards to traffic and noise. Unfortunately, this is what happens in a growing city. The high volume of attendees at this park on a daily basis shows the demand for such a place for dog owners to take their dogs for exercise and socialization. I can only imagine these high volumes will be reduced and spread out among the opening of more leash free parks throughout the city.

Although Guelph does have wonderful bylaws regarding dogs, I feel this can continue to be improved. Nearly half of households have a pet, and many would consider them part of the family. Guelph is known for the OVC and overall veterinary community, which is inherently made up of dog enthusiasts. Seeing what an important and crucial role dogs play in many families in this city, I think it is only right to keep expanding the places in which we can safely and legally take our canine companions to run free.

I can't imagine a dog park being louder than a group of children playing and screaming on a playground, and I think I speak for many by saying that a complaint about the noise of this excitement and exercise would be quite absurd. How is this much different than letting our dogs run and play after a long day of waiting for us to return home?

I urge council to reconsider the closing of the dog park and cancelling plans for further parks. A significant amount of taxpayer dollars went into the construction of the park and based on its popularity it has been WELL received in the dog owning community. Please do not limit where we can safely take our dogs to run and play due to complaints that are easily manageable. Instead, push forward and continue opening more to spread out the visitor burden and improve the lives of ourselves and our canine companions.

Thank you,
Amy Schut
Citizen of Guelph & Dog Owner

* * *

The dog park must stay open! With the growing city we need at least one! Its an important part of a city and great excersize for the dogs.

Katrina McLean

* * *

Hi there!

I hope you are doing well!

I just read an article about closing Guelph's fenced in dog park, without another one opening for a year or more after the closure. I have many concerns with this decision.

1. Having an allocated spot for dogs to run freely is much safer. If there isn't a suitable spot, owners will make their own. Ie childrens parks (and not all children know how to properly approach dogs).
2. The park has not been open long enough to really see the pros and cons. The unhappy and those that dislike change always yell the loudest, and first. Has there been any surveying on locals to get a better understanding of the true affects?
3. Are we not able to turn a portion of the park into parking?
4. Why can't we leave this open until a more suitable spot becomes available?
5. How does this affect city funds to open a park only to close months later? Do we really not have better things to invest in? For example - a daycare program for when teachers strike! More funding for police to look into things like the increase in car break ins around Kortright. Thats just two right off the top of my head.
6. Can we not turn the negatives into postives? Ie student summer jobs created by needing landscaping work done, open a cafe with dog treats, have paid parking where the proceeds are donated to the humane society, create a cat corner for outdoor/indoor cats to enjoy the park too, start a summer/school breaks program to properly teach families how to approach unknown animals safely. Again.. just the top of my head.
7. What does Guelph plan on doing with the property post closure? Is it going to just sit there and become an eye sore? Will it turn into a plaza (aka another local attraction that will not fix the parking situation)

I feel like this is an amazing opportunity to learn and grow for Guelph that has been turned into a lunchbag letdown. There needs to be a better compromise somewhere.

I hope talks about city issue dig deep into real issues and concerns instead of just giving up at the first complaint. I hate to see tax dollars and good green, environmentally friendly spaces going to waste because of a few naysayers.

Thanks for reading!
Avery Navikevicius

* * *

Hello,

My name is Taylor Brand ! I have lived in Guelph my whole life, I am a 23 year old dog owner. I enjoy using the dog park beside the Hanlon tho it is not fenced in... my dog also has amazing re call unlike many others. Going to a dog park has given her the opportunity to be in a area without losing me! Where she gets to interact with MANY other dogs , instead of hoping to do to the Hanlon and No one being there. The park at Peter misterski is maybe a issue to residents but I also think it makes that park more family oriented . There is a park close by so young children can play and so can our fur babies. Peter misteraki is also located in a area of Guelph where there is lots of high schools.. where there is a lot of drug activity. Peter misterski is not or was not a safe park when I used to go there. Always alcohol teenagers and drugs , now that there is a dog park it may help eliminate those issues. Also the dog park is ran on certain hours so wtf are ppl complaining about I have gone 2 times this week and no one has been there at all so I'm not sure where all the barking is coming from ... Also by the time most people are able to go after work you're not allowed to go anyways As it is after dark.

If we are going to start shutting down dog parks because of noise then why don't people start complaining about kids yelling and screaming at nearby parks because I am a dog person not a child person and people and children annoy me a hell of a lot more than dogs do. Should this mean children aare not aloud in malls considering that's not a place for children as when I'm trying to shop and get supplies I am not trying to run into everyone's Child.

Maybe if we decide as a city to keep these parks as a city we need to have people responsible as of opening and closing them I know many pet owners including myself would have no problem going over to places that have fenced in dog park cleaning them up cleaning up the dog Pooh and ensuring the rules are being followed. Also all the protesting that is going on is made out for all the people who do not want a dog park for all the people that do want one we have never been told to come to meetings to write letters or emails and two right now as this is why I am writing one.

Shutting down the current location of dog park is an option but you definitely need to have a plan in place for new ones before shutting this one down as the city is going to be extremely angry we finally got what we were asking for which was fenced in dog park and a year later you guys are going to shut it down that's ridiculous. Maybe a solution would be building a fenced in dog park with in the dog

park on the Hanlon? Or there is many trails up behind the Manor near Silver Creek that could be utilized.

There are various parks also up behind the YMCA that are not close to residential areas we need to be utilizing areas like this to create dog parks there aren't even many areas around Silver Creek and Willow that could be utilized for dog park as a city we need to brainstorm and come up with better locations instead of demolishing the whole idea together.

I really hope somebody takes the time to read my email as well as everybody else is in the community. As if we remove all dog parks my dogs happiness will be taken with it.

Hopefully we can keep dog parks

Taylor Brand

I'm writing this to put in my two scents about the dog parks. Please don't take them away from us. I and a lot of others use this every single day for hours on end to help socialize our pups. Since the park has opened it has been packed with great people and dogs! Very sad to see this go. As many others as well. I have socialized my 6 month old shepherd here since the day I got her she LOVES this place. I've met some great ppl here. Please re consider for all of us dog lovers and furry friends 🐾

We have nothing for our fur babies to just find friends and play where we don't have to worry about them 😊

Thanks.
Lindsay Marie

To whom it may concern,

As a dog owner, I would like to have a safe place to bring my dog to, so she can release energy and make friends with other dogs in the community. Since the opening of Peter Miserky Park, we have both dog & human created friendships with others in the community. Please don't abort plans. Guelph needs to offer this to its residents like many other cities do. Please keep plans to offer Guelph residents a place to build a sense of community with each other through local dog parks.

Sincerely,
Carrie Manson

To City Council

Removing the dog park at Mistersky park is not fixing a situation its caving in to a few neighbours in the area.

Guelph residents (majority) are usually responsible enough to pick up after there dogs, be alert when there is small children around, dog barking etc . What these people are complaining about is insane.

What if we were to take away kids playgrounds and ban them from backyards because night shift workers, or not allow any outdoor activity for their children because a few neighbours work afternoon or night shift and need their sleep. How would they like it?

This has been a long time coming for Guelph we get it then loose it? Clearly these residents had the chance to vote against it when the survey was out, at first reading at council they couldve voiced an opinion then.

How about relocating this particular 1 leave the one that is open now, open. Put some restrictions in place like dawn to dusk or something.

I personally did this survey and suggested we have 4 of them 1 in each end of town.

Now we have 1 and 2nd one is being closed before it even opens.

That really is a sad day in Guelph when some people who classify their dogs as children and their children are not aloud to play freely.

Andrea Nichols

Please reconsider keeping the dog park! So many dogs like my own love to run off leash but dont know their boundaries and just run and run putting themselves in danger. A fenced in dog park is the answer to that problem and by taking that away how is he supposed to fulfill his need to run like a lunatic.

Lisa Zebedee

Hi clerks,

Please keep the dog park and open the one on Bristol st. Thank you.

Sincerely, Dana MacDonald

* * *

You people need to give your heads a shake closing the existing facility at Peter Misersky Park and cancelling the Bristol St one. We need places to take out dogs to let them run free. You people have no clue what to do when it comes to spending our tax dollars, if you spend your own money like you spend ours your in big trouble. We need 60 million to go towards a new Hospital not a stupid Library, even a small town like Fergus is building one but nope not Guelph????

Brian Gordon

* * *

I would just like write to say that I am in favour of keeping the Peter misersky dog park open. We back onto the park and love the space for our dogs to run. We definitely need more fenced in dog parks in the city!

Thanks,
Jessie McKay

* * *

Hi there,
I am a local veterinary student at the OVC in Guelph, and I train service dogs for National Service Dogs. I think it would be a shame for the only off leash dog park to be shut down, especially after all the money that went into it. That being said, there definitely are some issues with poop bags/ noise/ it being used for dogs that owners can't control.. which is when it becomes messy, but these parks are in almost every city, so of all places, Guelph should be able to make it work.

I truly believe that If the possibility of shutting the park down is not there, the complaints will stop, and people who disagree, will just have to deal with it.

In regards to location, everyone will always say not in my back yard. I have heard many students say they wish they lived in those townhouses for convenience with the dog park. So there will be many people who may not want to be there, but probably many others who would want to be there.

Guelph is such a community and there are a lot of rescues/ adoptions/ friendly people who enjoy the outdoors and making friends through their dogs. I have used this park at least 25 times with my most recent service dog who just graduated from the autism program.

Maybe put the breaks on a new dog park for now, but please consider keeping the one in Peter Misersky park and maybe put whatever money from Bristol into that one to add more trees/ shelter for the dogs.

Thank you for taking the time to read this email, I hope it finds you well!

Erica Gibson

I'd like to add my name to the list of disappointed residents in the wake of your irresponsible decision to reverse course on the fenced in dog parks. Peter Misersky's park could certainly have been planned and placed better but we still need more spaces for dogs to play safely. The neighbors who complain about noise (from a park of all places) or extra parking will just find something else to complain about and would have been "relieved" of these burdens once the city got their behinds in gear and built them! It's no wonder so many born and raised Guelphites are leaving, this city counsel is not for our interests anymore.

Be better, Guelph
Steve Franklin

Greetings City Staff,

I am emailing you over my concerns about the possible cancellation of the Bristol St. Dog Park. We are a dog family and we also feel a strong connection to our community. We were over-joyed when these dog parks were announced as we were tired of driving to surrounding cities to use their leash free fenced parks. Frankly, it was embarrassing that Guelph did not have this amenity by 2019.

We have been to the Misersky Fenced Dog Park a number of times and were even more excited when the Bristol St. Park began moving forward. We went to meetings about the proposal for Bristol St. and it was quite appalling that people opposed to the Misersky Park were actively commandeering a meeting that was about an entirely different Dog park site. I feel as though the negative impacts of the Misersky Park have poisoned the Bristol Park. I want to be able to walk to the dog park in my community to exercise my dog. I want to be able to interact with my neighbours at this park. I don't want to face driving to the edge of town to exercise my dog. I read that noise cancelling green cover would be added to the Bristol Park. I feel as though accommodations are being considered for Bristol St. that would make it an improvement over some of the oversights of the Misersky Park.

In spite of the differences of the parks locations within the city and new accommodations we seem to be wasting more money and while losing the battle to keep the advancing dog parks for all of Guelph's residents who have dogs. I fully support the Bristol St. Fenced Off-Leash Dog Park. I would like to know your thoughts on this matter. How much money has been spent so far on the parks and how much will tearing down what has already been cost the taxpayers? What more can I do as a concerned citizen and dog owner?

Thank you for your time,
Drew Thompson

I am incredibly disappointed as a resident of Guelph for 35 years. I just got my first dog in the last two years and his best experiences have been at the dog park in Guelph. It is easily the best way to socialize a dog and help train them to be kind to other dogs and people. I think it is incredible wrong for this city to pass, build (with tax payers money) and in turn close a dog park because some people are whining about it. Did the city not do its research when building this initially?? Please reconsider. We do not have any sort of dog park. One can not be that bad since it is already built!!!

Alex Derma

* * *

Greetings City Staff,

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Thank you for your time,

Drew Thompson

* * *

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing in respect to the idea of closing the dog park at Peter Misersky park. Instead of doing such a radical move by closing it, how about moving it a bit out of

the way so that the neighbours are not subject to the noise of the dogs. The city has made the investment of the fence anyway, why not re-use it. elsewhere. Also, there seems to be a great demand for dog parks in the city as proven by the number of people using just the one space that perhaps the city could rethink the possibility of keeping the Bristol street park a go. Maybe with more options for dogs to play, the dogs would not be all confined to one area and creating havoc on one particular neighbourhood. Ripping this park out is not the solution, put your thinking caps on and work on a solution.

Denese Renaud

* * *

I was just reading that the off leash dog parks that are in the works are going to be cancelled and that the gorgeous one already built will be padlocked. Please don't let this happen. It is very few against these amazing spaces and many who support them. I understand taking a step back and reflecting on the ones not yet built but please don't waste all the resources that have been poured into the already built one. It is a great space and I am sure that with a little instruction and direction the dogs, human guests and neighbours can get along. It is important to have spaces like these for people to give their pets spaces to play and for owners to interact. It is nice that it is walking distance for some and for those who have to drive it isn't too far. Perhaps some monitoring and enforcement of quiet hours would help. Along with some more discussion about respecting one another, being patient and compassionate to one another. I truly wish we could get along especially in wide open spaces like these.

Thanks for your consideration and please let the doggies play!

Eileen Sheridan

* * *

To whom this may concern,

Closing Misersky is a huge disappointment. My friends and I walk over from Vancouver drive with our dogs, they have a great time, we have a great time. Everyone at the park is always so happy and talkative. Not only is this being taken away from us, it's been a massive waste of tax dollars. Who's footing the bill for this? How much is the removal going to cost? What will be put in place of this dog park? So many questions...

Extremely disappointed tax payer,

Tyler Garrard

* * *

This park is a great place with a great environment filled with very respectable dog owners. Please don't take away the park. It is also very critical for seniors and

others with mobility issues to ensure they are able to give their pets the exercise they need and the socialization skills. Take down a child's park in my neighborhood that lays empty every day and put one in my neighborhood.

Lisa Gray

Hi there

I'm emailing to be sure you are aware about the hundreds or thousands of us in Guelph that are devastated about the closing of the only dog park Guelph has ever had. Because of a few white male residents who complained about the dog park (and harassed dog owners which the city did nothing about) tax payers are out 100k? I cannot express enough how if the other two dog parks had been built on schedule the amount of dogs at Peter Miserky would have decreased by a third and the problems residents are having would be gone. Guelph is the only city of this size that didn't already have a dog park. And now we are going to have to have to wait years to have one again and that is ridiculous.

Please reconsider such a wasteful decision to remove an already built park.

Laura Hill

Dear City of Guelph

I request you reconsider your discussion on the dog park. We all know and it is scientifically documented that dog parks are beneficial for not only the animal but for the community. Yes there are problems that can be looked at to help reduce the smell. Install underground poop containers. Have shovels or poop scoopers available for those who have difficulty picking up.

If you are considering other sites why wait? Why not keep the only one at the moment open until you have found another suitable area.

Dog parks bring communities together for those who do not get out often other than for their fur Babies.

Why not look at solutions to help instead of cutting off the one source of activity for the dogs and community.

Dog parks are beneficial

Gives dogs a safe space to exercise and roam around freely (60 percent)

- Allows dogs to socialize with other dogs (39 percent)
- Allows owners a chance to be physically active with their pet (36 percent)

I hope you will reconsider your decision on this matter

Egle Boudreau

Hello,

I'm writing with the encouragement of Cam Guthrie for voices to be heard "Please, I cannot stress this enough, if you want to build the proposed second dog park at Bristol Street and keep the Misersky one open, email: clerks@guelph.ca so that your comments go to all of council before they make the final decision on this at the end of February.

Guelph has a clear need for a off leash dog park, it shows with the use of the one opened. There may be a few people speaking louder at the moment with an issue but you tend to here more from people who are angry than content. There was much planning that went into these parks and community outreach, there was a point that they could have given suggestions. Not too mention time and money that went into planning and building. I'm sure there is a way that everyone can come to an agreement, don't give up and scrap the whole idea when it is needed. Look to other communities who have successful dog parks if there is help needed in planning or modification. Look how full Hanlon creek gets, or exhibition park, there is a definite need, need not want. Hopefully counsel reconsiders scrapping the ideas and the money put in.

Sincerely,
Jackie Merkle

To Whom it May Concern,

I am emailing to put my voice forward in support of the new and proposed off leash dog parks in Guelph.

Thanks,
Laurel Borthwick

Hello!

Please keep the dog park in Guelph open and continue to build the new one! Dog parks are a place my dog and I are so happy and I believe in Guelph's ability to run them successfully.

Thank you!
Tonya Redwood

To whom it may concern,

First off, I want to thank you for all of the work you do! All of you at City Hall, you rock!

Secondly, I want to express my deep concern and disappointment over the decision to close our valuable fenced in dog park and not build the one on Bristol street. Honestly, I wasn't aware that this was still an issue until I saw the Guelph Today article last night. If I had known, I would have been there, fighting to keep this space open. I am begging you, please keep the current fenced in park open until there is a more suitable space made. I understand that the residents near the current park are not happy with it, but as dog owners in the City, we need a safe space to socialize our dogs, without fear of them running off. We love the current park, especially since our small dogs have their own space without the big dogs! This park is a huge asset to our community, and I understand that the current location may not be ideal. But please don't take it away from our pups!

I live downtown and was really excited for the Bristol street park as we have been driving to the east end multiple times a week to play at the current park.

I'm not asking for the Bristol street park to continue to be built, just please don't take away the current park until there is another place to take our dogs.

I want to emphasize the positive impact that this park has made in the dog community. My two girls are rescues, former puppy mill moms, they are nervous around people and other dogs. Since going to the park, both girls have been learning to be more comfortable around other people, and become more comfortable around other dogs. Not only is this a space for dogs to burn off their energy, but it is a space for dogs to learn with each other and work on valuable social and training skills.

Please, please, please don't take away the fenced in dog park without another one built.

If there is anything I can do to help you understand this further, please let me know.

Or if anyone just wants to meet my dogs and give them a nice snuggle and have a therapy session, just let me know. I would be happy to bring them down to City Hall!

Thank you for your time,
Sarah Hollands + Maybelline and Violet

I am writing to express my concern for the council to close the current dog park and cancel the future Bristol Street Park.

Please don't take these parks away!

The park location is actually great for us. As a single mom I can let my kids play and run my puppy in the park at the same time.

This city will complain about anything! The ones who USE it need a voice in this city too.

Nothing seems to ever be good enough for people and they seem to just need something to complain about (like how the plows aren't plowing fast enough so let's blow up social media)

These are the people council is letting voice for the rest of us?

At minimum if it was to be moved. have a New one ready to go BEFORE shutting it down!

One concerned puppy momma
Melissa Schuurman

To whom it may concern,

The fenced in dog parks are a fantastic extension of Guelph. I have been countless times with all ages of dogs and always been greeted with kindness. Yes there are some dogs with different temperaments than others but in my experience the vast majority of the time the owners of said dogs are aware and good with containing their pet.

Keep me open, open 3 more, just don't take away the most fun the furry guys can have.

Patrick Laing

Good morning,

My family and I wanted to show support of the fenced in dog park. We've had no issues and use it quite often. Our dog loves it and we have found owners and their dogs to be respectful. It's also creates a great sense of community among dog owners. Likely part of the problem is that it's the only fenced in dog park in Guelph and therefore it's being used far more than if there were other options for folks around the city.

Stephanie Thomson

* * *

Please don't close the Guelph dog parks! We have been waiting for the Misersky Dog park to open for such a long time and I am so saddened to hear it may be closing. This is my only outlet for my dogs. They burn so much energy there, get wonderful socialization, and the folks that use the park are wonderful. Every single time I've gone there have been only 4 MAX cars parked, and not a single poop bag left behind. Because of the uproar the residents have caused I feel people using the park are trying so hard to follow every single rule and be as considerate as possible. Ive even heard folks say they wait to go until after kids are in school to avoid disturbing the residents. Please don't close this park. Guelph needs a fenced dog park so badly.

Sincerely,

Jordan Legate

Dog owner of Guelph

* * *

We enjoy safely, we enjoy friendship. Our dogs can run free from cars and wild animals. We pick up after them, we are courteous about not making too much noise.

If your looking for new ground, why not develop the old white rose property on Edinburgh? Lots of room and parking, commercial zoning... there are apartments but there is a pretty big buffer with the train tracks there.

Or if you relocated the one ball diamond at norman jay park, you would have that great big field ready to go, no residents, just commercial around, parking, maintenance shouldn't be too much of a problem, there is a road already...?

Just ideas...? I think a fenced leash free park is a big asset to the city. Are we the only ones who dont have one?

Thanks for listening!

Lisa Christie

Dear Guelph Council

I am writing to ask no plead with you to not close The new fenced in dog park. No matter where you put something new there will be people that will complain that seems to be the way of the world. The saying you can't please everyone but I can tell you from experience this pleases the dogs. I foster rescue dogs who have no training so the dog park is amazing for me to socialize and allow the dogs to safely play off leash. My last dog flourished because of the park. I am so thankful for the friends he made and the confidence he got from those interactions. Leo asks you not to take away his favorite place and friends meeting place.

More photos are available of the joy the park brings the dogs and owners.

Thank you for your time
Shauna Brown

I (along with many others) are VERY upset about council's last minute punch in the gut by voting to close Misersky park and not build Bristol or Lee parks. That option wasn't even mentioned in the report that I saw! What the h-ll \$\$&\$!!

These parks are needed and need to be accessible for EVERYONE! How is anyone going to get to Eastview or some place out in an industrial area if they don't drive? Can't take your dog on the bus can you.

I don't even use the park as my dog gets a bit reactive but I think it is a great place for people to exercise their dogs and socialize And keep their dogs safe while training them. So just because a very few don't want it the majority must suffer?

This council is a joke and definitely does whatever they feel like no matter what the people want. I hope they realize that they have just shot themselves in the foot and should be concerned about the next election!

That's my rant.

Lynn Hamilton

I'm writing as a resident of Guelph to express extreme disappointment to the decision to close the existing dog park without having any options for a replacement in the near future.

Is there a good reason why Guelph can't provide a service that is available in Kitchener, Waterloo, Hamilton and other city's?

This does not include the frustration as a tax payer for the \$100,000+ wasted by poor city planning.

I would like to know the city's plan to provide this service to residents that own dogs the same way it offers parks to those with children, tennis courts and skateboard parks?

Michael Peace

* * *

Good Evening Mr Mayor, and Ward 1 Councillors.

I was very disappointed to learn of the recommendations to close the Peter Misersky park and to "reconsider it in the 2021 budget". Removing this community resource without an alternative is completely unacceptable. The cost alone to build it initially makes removing it without even attempting the previously recommended remediation efforts fiscally irresponsible. The fact that it will be reconsidered for 2021 without a firm commitment is also unacceptable. There is a large community of people who have come to use and love the park on a daily basis.

If council were to implement the remediation steps (move the fence back, add shrubs etc. as sound barriers) this could certainly help and then more feedback could be gathered - it is always better to it If council were even to move it altogether I could also understand this but to close the park without providing an alternative at the same time it is being closed is unfair and pandering to the loudest voice in the room. I also understand why you are hesitant to open the others after the outcry around peter misersky but closing the one park we do have is not the answer, even if "those councillors felt it made more sense to close Peter Misersky rather than keep one park open and deal with the issues it is causing." (source: Guelph Today article).

I am deeply disappointed in the council's likely decision and will rally my fellow dog owners to reach out to their councillors, the mayor and if possible form a delegation for the next council meeting where this will be definitively decided. I urge you and your other council members to re-consider. Consider promising to remove the park after another suitable location has been completed. These are the types of resources that make people want to move to Guelph, for people to invest in Guelph, to open new companies and to stay here. As your early study showed we are very far behind other cities in terms of this type of amenity.

Caleah Campbell

* * *

To whom it may concern,

I recently saw Cam Guthrie's tweet about how no one has responded to requests for support for the dog parks in the community.

I personally use the dog park at Peter Mzerski Park. I find it to be an asset to the community..

Thanks
Kyle Anderson

Hello,

I am sending in my support to keep the off-leash dog parks. I have a small dog that I can not take the off-leash area on the Hanlon as I do not find it a safe location for my dog. I hope the council will reconsider closing any of these dog parks and maybe open some others in the vacant lots we have sitting around Guelph.

Thank you in advance
Vicki Maybanks

I am very disappointed that this park is scheduled to be closed. I am a new dog owner of a Cocker Spaniel that has an abundance of energy that regular walks just don't drain. I have brought him to the dog park; it has helped with his behavioural issues because of too much energy as well as great socialization with other dogs. Please consider A) keeping the dog park open or B) keeping the dog park open until a better park can be erected. This will make Dog Owners happy as well as the "whiners"

Thank you for taking the dog owners into consideration.

Sincerely
Kathy Free and my puppy Bundy

Hello,

My family and I have been living in Guelph for the past 2.5 years and I absolutely love this city! We have recently discovered the Peter Misersky dog park and are very disappointed it will be closing. We have met so many great people and enjoy going as much as the dogs do! There are people that come from the south and west ends and drive 15 min or more to come to the park because it's so great. I have recommended to all my neighbours to bring their dogs there because it's such a nice place to be as a dog owner. Everyone is so friendly and you can get a good

laugh in watching the dogs run around. I really hope that there is another place you can put up a dog park.

A little suggestion would be to put up those tall skinny cedar trees all along the front of the dog park.....less noise and smell for the residents maybe? And not as expensive as ripping out all that fencing and putting in a new park?

What about a subscription to use the park? Or a metal change box you could throw a toonie in every time you went to pay for the trees?

Thank you,

Allison Dowling
(And Lennon the retriever)

I understand that some aren't happy with the extra traffic at the dog park but for those of us with dogs that can't be off leash without running away need a place to let them run. Please don't close the park.

Kathryn Neale

I was told recently by a coworker that the city plans to close the fenced dog park that was recently built and opened - what an incredible waste of time and resources. This would be an irresponsible decision by the city.

This park is obviously an excellent resource for dog owners who want safety for their dogs AND children. Why would the city seek to close this?

I am told based on comments on reddit and elsewhere that it is based on one vocal man living in the area. He needs to be told that his opinion is not the only one that matters and the entire city needs resources for their families and happiness like this one.

Keep this park open.

Alexandra Stoneham

Hi,

I'm extremely disappointed in the closure of the dog park. This seems absolutely backwards. It doesn't seem to make any sense that every other city this size (and much smaller!) have multiple dog parks. The city needs to figure out a way for this to happen. I have long wanted a place where I could take my dog off-leash and allow him to play with other dogs. I don't feel comfortable doing this a regular

parks or sports fields. We live in an old neighbourhood and do not have a suitable backyard for him to play in.

I'm so disappointed in my city. I thought that they were finally going to make this happen.

Melanei Parlette-Stewart

From my experience the dog owners using the park are responsible. Any mess is picked up and I did not detect any smell.

The park is so good for dogs to play together. Owners who have been at work all day have a place to take their pets to get some much needed exercise in a safe space.

You are doing a disservice to the citizens of Guelph should you consider closing this space. Time and money - \$100,000 has been cited - has been spent.

Please give this your utmost consideration. From my visits there, I have only witnessed responsible behaviour by the dog owners using this space.

Respectfully yours

Linda Bryant

To whom it may concern,

Please don't close any of the off leash dog parks in our city!! Especially the fenced in park in the east end. Dogs and their people love and enjoy these areas! Don't let a few loud-mouth whiney constituents ruin it for everyone, that's not fair!

Sincerely,

Tara MacLeod-Tucker.

I'm writing in response to the potential closure of the new dog park and cancellation of the other 2 proposed parks.

First, what a waste of money to open a park to turn around and close it less than a year later. Dog parks don't add noise to a neighbourhood- I should know seeing as I had one basically in my yard in mississauga. It brought neighbours together, made people and dogs more active & formed a greater sense of community.

This shouldn't be up to staff to decide this. If any changes are to be made it should be a public vote instead of having the city waste the cities money on opening and closing parks at will.

All the people want is a fenced in area for dogs to play. Why is this so hard to understand? It's not rocket science. The one park is already built, leave it alone. If you want to adjust plans for the unbuilt parks, fine but we need more dog parks. Thank you for your time.

James Highet

Sooo disappointed to hear about the closure and cancellation of current and upcoming leash-free dog parks! A few loud voices and all the work and planning you've done goes out the window?

Maybe not everyone is a dog person, I get it. But having areas dedicated to parks highlights our city as a caring, proactive community who fosters health lifestyles (physically, through being outside and mentally, by having a companion and from being outside!

Please bring back the dog park!!

Angi Roberts

I can't begin to tell you how disappointed I was to hear that the fenced in dog parks are being closed. Every time I was there there was no issue with noise or any problems. Perhaps when more locations open the PM park would have less traffic.

You should have had more patience. You reacted based on one or two people who complained and campaigned very hard against them.

Please reconsider

Tracey Rowe

I see on facebook our mayor is rallying the masses to flood you with email in support of the dog park at Peter m park and others. Well I am AGAINST said park. Thank you. Also the library is also not needed at that price point.

Thanks.

Dougie

* * *

I'm writing in support of keeping the dog park open!

I certainly hope they keep the Bristol street location as an option!

Barbara Anderson

* * *

How dare this city spend \$100.000 on a much needed and well used dog park and then close it because of a loud mouth bully who harassed and scared women because he lost his extra two parking spots This is the man who bought a house there and then complained about children making noise playing

Now you are appeasing him and it's going to cost more to disband

Shame on you So much wasted dollars

Theresa Finamore

* * *

I am absolutely disgusted to find out the well used and loved dog park is to be closed

This was a sneaky decision to appease the man who was bullying and harassing women

The heart of the matter is that he wanted what he assumes is his extra two parking spots back

He has even complained about children playing in the park

This is a horrendous waste of taxpayers money

Shame on council

The names of those who voted to do this will not be forgotten at election time

Theresa Finamore

* * *

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Thoreau Colucci and I am a student at the University and a resident of Guelph. I am emailing you today regarding going the recent decision to close the Misersky dog park and cancel the 2 other projects.

With the number of dogs per household continuing to rise, having designated fenced-in off leash areas is critical for any city, especially one such as Guelph. By terminating these projects, all stakeholders are going to suffer and some may be put in danger.

Firstly, for many dogs they require frequent and lasting socializing with other dogs in order to properly stimulate and train them. Fenced-in off leash areas provide this opportunity unlikely any other setting. As a dog owner, I know that if there are not designated areas to fulfil this, it is guaranteed that non-designated areas will be used instead, to the detriment of everybody involved.

Secondly, the designated fenced-in off lease areas offer a place for dogs to learn and play without the risk of them endangering themselves (by traffic, running away, etc.) as well as endangering others, such as children and families.

I implore you to reconsider the decision to close the Misersky Park, and to continue to implement the remaining 2 projects. As evidenced in countless other cities - Toronto, for example - the presence of these parks has undeniable benefits to the entire community.

Sincerely,
Thoreau Colucci

* * *

Good morning,

I was very disappointed to hear of the cancellation of the construction of the new Bristol Street dog park, and the closure of the Misersky dog park. As a Guelph resident with a dog, having access to designated space that's safe for dogs (and the community) within town limits is critical.

Community members are right that there needs to be safe and designated areas for children/families, and space for dogs where we live, so these parks need to remain open. By closing the Misersky park and canceling the construction of the new Bristol Street park, you are removing those safe spaces for dogs and their owners in town.

Responsible dog owners deserve to have a safe space to care for their pets, just like responsible community members deserve to have a safe space for their children to play; one does not deserve the other more. We pay to license our dog and we pay taxes to the City of Guelph.

Please reconsider and think of us responsible dog owners, who wants a space in our City that is safe for our dogs.

Thank you,

Chelsea Woolley

Guelph dog park should stay no one stays after dark no laws are being broken. Provide real evidence that you can hear large amounts of noise after dark.

Darryl Gemin

This is so short sighted

We need to find a solution so our pets have a place to run Why waste the \$\$\$ At least leave open until new sites can be found!

Not happy at all that we are not opening the other planned dog run area

Michael Stultz

I am frustrated that council would try and sneak voting on closing dog parks especially when they have just been opened. A smart person would realize once more parks are opened traffic at the 1 will go down drastically, you have allowed people to bully you into wasting more tax payers money by shutting these down.

The right thing to do would be ask the people of Guelph as you are to bring their concerns to the council not speak and do what you think the people of Guelph want.

Kelly Bolton

Hello, sending my vote and support for a fenced dog park.

There must be a way to satisfy BOTH sides, not just take away all three that were promised. That is absolutely unacceptable.

Lori White

Please, please please leave the current fenced in dog park open until a new one in a better suited location is built and useable. In a city the size and quality of Guelph, this is a much needed, overlooked asset. Please vote to keep the park open, thank you.

Colleen deVries

* * *

Hi.

We live at XXX Guelph.

I do not have dog. I have a cat which I am not allowed to let outside. That's ok. I am opposed to having these dog parks so close to residential areas due to smell, noise, and spoiling parkland(mud and worn and messy areas as per photos I have seen).

The City has spent \$100,000 on Misterski dog park and another large amount on starting Bristol. This really concerns me as taxpayer if 44 years!
I understand we already have a 54 acre leash free park in Guelph. It is not in a residential area. That's great!

I am greatly disappointed in your response to this, Mayor Guthrie. People vote and people come first, not dogs. Let people in the city walk their dogs on a leash. Otherwise go to the 54 acres or another park that is not so close to residential areas.

I voted for you and now I am extremely disappointed I your lack of insight. I have been supportive of you until now.

My sons played their first soccer in Bristol park. Now part of those fields Have disappeared in favour of starting construction of Bristol dog park. Cam Guthrie, if you played soccer in Guelph, that park is where it started. The children playing soccer there are 4-5 years old. We have been fortunate to have that soccer field for little ones. If this park goes through those kids playing in the fields left, will experience dog noise and smells from their waste.

This is unhealthy to both soccer players, families and all residents in the area. Children are our future.
Please think about this...

I have contacted our Councillor, James Gordon. He listened to my concerns. Council, please vote in favour of this latest proposal which will end residential leash free dog parks in Guelph. Remember, Bristol is less than the standard regulation size for a park like this.

This is an extremely contentious issue. I assure you that the outcome of this issue will dictate the outcome many other decisions Council will face in future, including elections. Think, please, and act responsibly in your vote.

The vote allowing these parks to proceed was passed with counsellors being unprepared and uninformed with little public consultation or consideration. Now you

have information and can appropriately vote, based on public, city staff and Council's input.

Thank you.
Kathy Stephens

* * *

Hello,

I am a ward 1 resident. I live at 74 Creighton Avenue. I've been silent thus far (because the status quo was fine with me)... but in light of the decisions by the council last night, I feel I need to speak up.

I find the decision to close the Peter Misersky Dog Park with no viable alternative to be extremely disappointing.

I understand that some of the residents next to the park want it removed. The park is not ideally placed and the residents were not consulted before it was built. As a daily user of the dog park, I don't agree with many of the claims I've heard from the residents... however I do understand and sympathize with their concerns and I support the idea of removing the park.

That said, the park provides an incredible, safe, off-leash area for a lot of dog owners. For many owners, a reliable recall isn't an option (or is not yet trained) and letting the dogs run in an un-fenced area is a risk both to the dog and to the general public. Walking my puppy for an hour doesn't get out nearly as much energy as she does in 20 minutes of running around the dog park.

I would like to see a second dog park (an alternative) built before this one is closed. The money has already been spent on this park and while it inconveniences a few residents right now, it is benefiting many, many more who will have no backup option if it is closed immediately.

With regards to sites, like many have suggested, I think it would make a lot of sense to build a park at the Eastview/Watson site... if some part of that park's plan (eg. the splash pad) needs to be replaced with a dog park, perhaps the thing being removed from the Eastview park plan could instead be built in Peter Miserky (once the new dog park is open and this one is removed).

There also seems to be a lot of land away from residences down at the Dragonfly park. Perhaps that would be reasonable site as well?

I hope that the city takes the long view on this and keeps the existing park open until a new site is chosen and constructed. If closing this one is considered urgent, please make the construction of a different site even more urgent.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Mike Timmerman

* * *

To All Members of Guelph City Council,

We are writing to you to express our concern and dismay regarding the ongoing dispute over the fenced-in dog parks. I suggest a vote, in the same way that Council makes decisions, to decide what is to be done. Let the people who pay taxes and who this decision will affect the most decide.

I honestly cannot understand why you would even consider closing the one at Peter Misersky Park. I have been there many times, at different hours of the day, and not once has the parking lot been filled, nor have I smelled any offensive odors coming from or even around this park. I have heard a few barks and woofs, but certainly not anything that could be considered a disturbance. I could understand there being cause for complaint if the barking was excessive. Dogs bark to communicate. This is completely normal.

This park cost a lot of money, and I don't believe it has been given a fair chance. It is far safer than a leash-free, un-fenced park. Because the dogs are contained, there is no chance of any of them running up to "say hello" to a passer-by, or jumping up at anyone in an exuberant quest for attention. Small children are not permitted in the fenced-in park, whereas in a regular leash-free park we have very little control over who approaches our dogs. Not all dogs are good at recall, so being contained in a fenced-in park keeps them safe.

There are many more people who are upset about the possibility of this park closing, than there are those who don't want it there. We all pay taxes. Don't our wants and needs count too? The residents who complained say that they were not notified about the building of this park. Yet the park took some time to build, not to mention the presence of large construction vehicles and workers. If I lived across from this sort of action, I would have asked questions right from the start. I don't live in the immediate area, yet I knew that the park was going to be put in well in advance. How could the residents not know? I am not trying to invalidate their concerns, but surely there is some sort of compromise that can be reached so that everyone's needs are considered. What about the proposal to move the fence back a bit, and to put in trees and bushes to help "camouflage" it and help with the so-called noise? This made a lot of sense to me.

We look forward to your reply on this matter.

Regards,
Alison and Janet Dunkley (and Scruffy, the dog)

* * *

To whom it may concern,

The closing of this dog park has outraged a ton of you Guelph citizens, surely more than the five people who complained. The dog park was not put in the best, most reasonable spot, but a fully fenced dog park is needed. There is not a day that goes by where there are not people at that park with their dogs. That shows how much this park is needed. It will be completely irresponsible of you to close it down and not move it at least. This was one of the places that gave Guelph citizens something to do with their dogs and socialize with other dog people and have their dogs socialize and learn how to play with other dogs. This was the only place my puppy would go to play with other dogs and he absolutely loves it. He whines whenever we are close because he is so excited. If you care about your citizens the way you say then stop listening to the bad apples that will complain about something else next and listen to the majority that you have made very happy.
DON'T CLOSE THE PARK DOWN

Thank you for your time

Nicole Moniz

Good morning,

I'm adding my name to keep the dog park at Peter Misersky park pls.
Thank you.

Donna Armstrong

Just read about council's shortsighted decision to shut down the new fenced dog park and stop progress on the other ones.

I'm one of many thousands of residents that are quite disheartened by this. Please tell council to reconsider this decision.

Len Fowler

Please do shut down the Miserski dog park...thanks

Mike Kennedy

Hello,

It was recently brought to my attention that the city is closing the only fenced dog park and will be scraping the plans they had for the 3 others. As a dog owner, I find

this very upsetting. Could you please explain to me the rationale behind these closures. Please reconsider, there are many people who would love the parks and respect the rules too.

Sincerely,
Kayleigh Kennedy

* * *

To whom it may concern,

I believe that this decision is an absolute knee-jerk reaction designed to appease a small number of residents who complain even when Ultimate Frisbee games are played at that park (I know from listening to the disgruntled bunch yelling from their balconies while we've played), let alone a fenced dog park (something we otherwise have not had in Guelph)... and yet, in a act of utter "spineless-ness" city council has now voted to waste a great deal more of public funds in order to cater to this miserable bunch of people.

These types of actions (knee-jerk/ rife with poor judgment/ costly) are why no one trusts their governments and you're viewed so commonly as crooks. You've raised my taxes and then pissed away city money, for what? All in a learning effort? That's how we're justifying this irresponsible use of city money? Meanwhile, the thousands of residents who have yearned for a properly fenced in dog park, are now back waiting (with higher taxes than last year) and not only nothing to show for it; it is in fact as if we've been provided less than nothing and abandoned in an effort to cater to disgruntled residents...

By the way – we have multiple crime related epidemics in our city – we have rampant B & E's, downtown is in a disgusting state due to the lack of demonstrated concern for hypodermic needles, fentanyl is everywhere but hey, let's waste more money concerning with real problems like the first fenced in dog park in Guelph.

Had little to no interest in municipal politics in this city but my interest has been gained and I'll be making sure to look into representatives in our next government who are inclined to trim fat and reduce horrendously inefficient spending as is being demonstrated currently and effectively using funds to properly address problems in our city. You've done a piss poor job in this case and this is a pathetic misuse of city funds and city resources...

Do better...

Craig Powers

* * *

Hi Cam.

Just read the article about closing the Dog park in Guelph.....too bad.

I realize that some people are just not "dog people" and I respect that. As one who uses the park, I wondered how many on the Council who voted to close the park have actually been there, and watched the activities. I think it is necessary before a final unbiased decision is made. The park is not noisy, except for the occasional bark, but amazingly, it is quite quiet. There are always parking spots free and not all the parking spots are used by dog owners. There are children in the park and others going into the condos.

I just think that before closing such a great spot, the council should experience it.

Marnie Blackwood

* * *

Dear Cam Guthrie and Council

I previously sent a short email regarding the closing of the Misersky Dog Park, but I feel it necessary to further express my concerns.

We discovered this park in the fall and what a great find! We take our dog a few times a week, and it is a perfect place to go. All the dogs are fenced in. All the dog waste is picked up and there is a container available for the compostable waste. I read a letter that one of the concerns was dog waste left behind...where is it left? The people complaining are obviously not in with the dogs and if it is in the compostable waste container...good for us! There is always parking, and everyone is happy. There is even a fenced area for little dogs.....great idea. I understand that many people are not "dog people" and have no interest in this park or others, and I respect that. Having said that, those involved in making the decision to close the park must do so after investigating thoroughly and without prejudice, a decision based on fact.

My questions to you are as follows:

Who is complaining about the park? Is it the people living across from the park or people from the general public? Those who do not live in the area would be unaffected by the dog park and probably have not been anywhere near it, so really know nothing about it. Nor is it their issue.

What is the noise complaint about? I read one of the complaints was noise. The dogs play but rarely is there a lot of barking..the only barking we encounter is our dog, in the car, as soon as we approach the park. It certainly is not the owners who make noise. The dogs play. Occasionally, they bark. Just like children in the other parks, who are laughing and running and making noise, they are having fun....and deserve to have fun. I think that only someone who loves dogs can appreciate this, and I know there are many people in Guelph who love dogs.

Are the parking spaces at the park for the public or for the condo owners? If they are for the public, would there be complaints if someone parked there and took

their children to the adjoining park? This has happened when we were there. If they are public, anyone should be able to park there.

We live downtown. Five days a week, the parking spots on our street are all filled by 8:00 a.m. We don't complain. We chose to live in the city.

If the condo owners, through their fees have rights to those spots, then we, as dogs owners, find another place to park.

Have the council members actually been to the park, spent some time there and experienced the genuine fun? Or, has the decision been based on letters and emails from people who have no love for, or understanding of the needs of dogs and their owners. We live in a city...a great city....and cities have dogs...lots of them. Please be sure that your decisions are not based on the opinions some have about dogs in general, but are based on factual evidence gathered by experiencing the park in question.

One of the complaints expressed in a letter I read, indicated more traffic in the area. There is another park at the end of the street..of course there will be cars. They are on the street and should not have any effect on those inside. The only concern with traffic would be if the cars were speeding or driving carelessly....not happening. Saying the traffic is a problem is looking for something to kindle the complaint.

In conclusion, what is the rush to close this park? Give it time. If, after a fair and unbiased investigation has taken place and there is need to close the park, so be it.

The dog park is a great addition to our city. We, as dog owners, can be flexible, with regard to issues of concern. Please do not close this park or stop completion of others until you have really looked at the apparent problems and the sources of complaint.

Thank you for your time,
Marnie Blackwood

* * *

Hello,

My name is Justine Kraemer and I have been a resident of Guelph for the last five years. I was so excited when it was first announced that fenced in dog parks were being planned through the city of Guelph. When my family dog, Chip, an 11 Year old Shitsu-Bischon mix, comes to visit me from Mount Forest (which is quite frequent especially in the spring and summer months), my family finds it difficult to travel around the city with him. He is a very social dog, and when he is on a leash he often pulls himself too hard to initiate play with other dogs that we encounter and their respective people. Having a fenced in area that is for dogs would not only allow us to spend time outside with him in Guelph, but would give him a chance to be off his leash and socialize with other dogs. I do hope that City council re-consideres developing a space where dogs can be out in public and run free without leashes. Chip was really looking forward to this.

Thank you in advance for your consideration,

Justine Kraemer

Dear Ward Councillors, Clerk Office, Parks and Recreation Department, and Mayor,

I am writing to express my extreme frustration and disappointment with the City of Guelph's decision to close the fenced in dog area at Peter Misersky park.

I am a relatively new dog owner who just recently discovered the dog park and the robust community surrounding it. My girlfriend and I are frequent visitors to the park and have made friends with other people similarly attracted to the wonderful space. It is the only fenced in park in the city, is a clean and large space, has plenty of parking, and is in a great location. And most importantly our dog loves it and it provides a safe and large space for him to get exercise and interact safely with other animals.

Not once have we experienced any of the alleged complaints about the park but instead witnessed:

- owners being courteous of their animal and and its behaviour toward other visitors and their dogs, instantly separating them if aggressive and always leaving immediately if there are any problems
- people cleaning up after their animal almost instantly and others even stepping in to pick up anything accidentally missed by someone else
- owners being respectful of the hours of operation and showing up during the normal hours and leaving when appropriate
- everyone having a great time and loving that the city they live in has used their tax dollars to build something as great as this fenced in dog park that they can use in a positive and effective way

On the contrary, the only negative we have heard about is harassment stemming from one nearby homeowner who has accosted members of the public for simply bringing their animals to the park and using it for its intended purpose, which is the entire point of the space.

It was also extremely frustrating to hear that the recent discussion regarding the fate of the park took place at 2:00 PM on a weekday when the vast majority of people are working and otherwise preoccupied. This leaves the floor open to certain people who not only have an intense grudge against the dog park, but also an overabundance of free time to invest into showing up in the middle of the work day to try and shut down a popular and important feature of the city.

I urge everyone involved to reconsider this decision. To be blunt, I consider this a electoral deal-breaker and any vote cast to close the park completely unacceptable, especially without an immediate and better solution. Passing the buck until 2021 is

lazy and disrespectful. I also consider the suggestion that the park be ripped up or padlocked to be insulting and fiscally irresponsible from the perspective of a taxpayer and long-time resident of Guelph. Removing or obstructing access to popular, functional, and low-maintenance infrastructure for the sake of appeasing an extremely small and vocal minority makes no sense.

I have let all my friends, family and co-workers know about what is going on and will keep them informed as this progresses. They are all residents of Guelph who own animals as well, and are not happy to hear that spaces they use are being thrown away, as well as their tax-dollars, all because a couple of people are unhappy.

I will be at the meeting on Feb 24 at 5:30 PM. Please mark me down as a delegate and confirm what is required.

Thank you and I hope everyone has a pleasant day,

Jack Runge

* * *

Hi there,

Please do not remove the Peter Misersky dog park! As someone who uses this park regularly, and who has lived with my house backing onto this park for 25 years, it would be very upsetting if it was removed. Before this dog park, many people would have their dogs off leash in the football field and old baseball diamonds which resulted in a lot of dogs running away, being lost ect. This dog park has really brought people together as they can relax knowing that their dogs can't run away, all the while getting to know others in the community. Especially those who travel from opposite ends of town just to bring their dogs here.

Having a dog park where people have to pack up their dog and drive to, defeats the purpose in my opinion! It's not always easy packing up your animals, driving, finding parking, and doing the same thing to come home. I can now walk around the corner, have my pups play and run, and be home in 25 minutes. Whereas having to drive out of town just for an off leash park takes almost 1.5/2 hours, depending on how long your dog likes to enjoy the outdoors.

I do understand those who do not follow rules, pick up after their dogs, ect. But just like any other rules and/or "laws" within the city, those people should have consequences accordingly just like with anything else.

Thank you for listening,

Sarah Duncan

* * *

To whom it may concern,

I am extremely disappointed to hear that Guelph will be without fenced off-leash dog parks in the near future. I am moving from Ottawa, which has plenty of safe off-leash locations, to Guelph with my dog in the coming months. Many dogs, like mine, have high prey drives that cannot be overcome with any amount of training and therefore cannot be allowed off-leash in non-fenced areas too close to roads. However, I believe that off-leash exercise and playtime opportunities are absolutely integral to dogs' well-beings and mental health. You will be taking away this component of my dog's happiness, and many others', in the process of removing all fenced dog parks in Guelph. I strongly urge you to reconsider this decision, or to find a solution that appeases dog owners as well as nearby homeowners.

Regards,

Lana Katz

* * *

Please keep the dog parks.

Thank you

Margaret William's

To Whom it May Concern,

I feel it is important that I as a citizen of Guelph have an opportunity to voice my opinion about the recent vote to cancel construction on new dog parks and close the existing one. I have been using the park since it opened and my dog and I love it. I think the large number of people that use the park is a strong indication that this was something that was needed, and we need more. Opening the remaining dog parks will help to reduce the problems being experienced at Peter Misersky. Please reconsider this decision and instead focus that time and money on improving the existing park and building more. We can't wait another year.

Thank you

Kaleigh O'Driscoll

I don't think the fenced in dog park in Myserskie Park should be removed. I would also like to see the one on Bristol Street built.

James Walke

I firmly support the dog park staying where it is at Peter Misersky Park. I live 5 minutes (walking) from the park and my dogs exercise there every day for a good hour usually. Every day when I take them out in the morning, they get so excited because they know exactly where we are going. They could walk there by themselves, I'm sure of it! Having that space available, especially in the winter due to icy sidewalks, is so important to me and my dogs as well as other dog owners who we've met through using the park. In fact, as someone who works from home, it is the only real daily social interaction I get, let alone my dogs. I have made quite a few friends there. I know I am not alone on this. I was born and raised in Guelph and have lived here most of my life, and this is the first time I've felt a sense of community coming together. If the Bristol Street park were completed, as well as the Lee Street park, then I'm sure there would not be as many people at Misersky and the noise/parking complaints would not be such a big deal and the area would settle down. The fact that so many people are using the park should be reason enough to complete the other parks. There is definitely a need for enclosed dog park areas in the city. Off-leash is not the answer because people want a safe area they can let their dogs run free, knowing that they cannot get out. Not everyone's dog(s) are great at recall.

Also, from someone who lives very close to the park, I can honestly say that I have never heard any bothersome barking; in fact, I hear more noise coming from dogs on my street or from dogs whose backyards back onto the park, than I do from the dogs at the dog park.

Please reconsider letting the Peter Misersky dog park stay. It is a valuable resource for so many people on a daily basis and I would hate to see it demolished due to a few squeaky wheels.

Sincerely,
Merryn Nadalin

As a dog owner in Guelph, I IMPLY you to not let the voices of a loud few ruin a wonderful community element in Guelph. There were public meetings held on this issue and decisions were made after research was done. MOST growing cities have enclosed leash parks. Why can't Guelph? It feels like whenever there is some evolution to this city, a small group of people shut it down. PLEASE don't let this be the case here. Keep the dog park open!!

Thank you.

Nancy MacKenzie

Hello,

Fenced dog parks are much needed in Guelph because our dogs deserve to play and hang out with their friends in a safe environment!

Please DO NOT close the current dog park and open the one at Bristol Street too!

Thank you!!!!

Shirley D.

Hi everyone,

In anticipation of the upcoming meeting, I just want to submit a couple of recent academic articles that explore the effects of dog parks on the well-being of communities and people.

Please find attached, "Between a dog and a green space: applying ecosystem services theory to explore the human benefits of off-the-leash dog parks" by Isaac Middle (2020, Landscape Research, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01426397.2019.1580353>) and "On the Fence: Dog Parks in the (Un)Leashing of Community and Social Capital" by University of Waterloo Professors Taryn Graham and Troy Glover (2014, Leisure Studies,

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01490400.2014.888020>). Perhaps these studies may have already passed your desks.

Both studies underscore the important social benefits of such parks. They act as gathering places, create engaging spaces, and allow for positive interactions between dogs and people. Re: policy planning, Graham and Glover list several recommendations, including the establishment of Dog Park Committees. I would share this recommendation and suggest that Guelph might consider the benefit from such community input in a more formal, and ongoing sense.

I've had dogs my entire life, and am a strong advocate for responsible interactions between dogs and people. Daily walks allow us to get to know our neighbours – dog owners and not – and make for a nicer sense of community. An awful lot of people in Guelph have dogs and it would be nice to have the opportunity to allow our dogs to run off leash every now and then - it's good for them and makes them more social and friendly. Most dogs and dog owners are great, some are not so great, and perhaps it's a bit unfair to judge all of us based on a select (less than stellar) few. In hindsight, it appears that the roll out of the Peter Misersky Dog Park might possibly have been handled better. Neighbours have now raised valid concerns about noise and parking but I do hope there is still room for folks to coexist. Many are suggesting use of Eastview Park and the creation of a fenced area for off leash dogs – and I think this is a great idea. It's a beautiful park that our family has taken our dogs to for years. But I would hesitate to exclusively make use of these more remote spaces, away from houses, because they ghettoize the activity of dog play, and more importantly, they are hard for many folks in Guelph to get to without a car. I think it's so much better to have local neighborhood spaces within walking distance of most people. Like tennis courts, some patrons stay too late and create a ruckus. But rather than shutting down these valuable spaces for everyone because of a few, let's take a breath, and try for a more cooperative approach that helps educate everyone from all perspectives. It would be a shame to shut down the Peter Misersky Dog Park without having alternatives already in place.

Thanks for this opportunity to provide some input.

Best,
David Cameron

100,000\$ later, to close the park?

Guelph citizens rely on this park as an amazing outlook for their pets.

I know so many people that bring there dogs to the park, and it relieves there own stress and anxiety getting to see there dog have fun.

Talking with other parents, and buiding a community.

No one even goes to the park early, nor do they stay late enough (since it gets dark at 5pm) to disrupt anyones sleep.

Also, majority of the time im there, there is barely any barking.

Close it, and remind the people who wanted it closed that its more of their tax dollars.

Sydney MacDonald

Dear Ward Councillors, Clerk Office, Parks and Recreation Department, and Mayor,

I am writing to express my extreme frustration and disappointment with the City of Guelph's decision to close the fenced in dog area at Peter Misersky park.

It is the only fenced in park in the city, is a clean and large space, has plenty of parking, and is in a great location.

I have been at the park with my son and his dog and have enjoyed the time we spend there.

Everyone was respectful, responsible and courteous.

It was extremely frustrating to hear that the recent discussion regarding the fate of the park took place at 2:00 PM on a weekday when the vast majority of people are working and otherwise preoccupied. This leaves the floor open to certain people who not only have an intense grudge against the dog park, but also an overabundance of free time to invest into showing up in the middle of the work day to try and shut down a popular and important feature of the city.

I would ask everyone involved to reconsider this decision. Certainly keeping this open until you find another solution is the only answer.

Tim, Susan Runge

Hello,

Please don't close this park. You have no idea how happy the dogs are. The park only bothers a handful of people who live near it and benefits SO many dogs. They need this socialization and exercise in a place that allows them to be offleash. It is much better to compromise than to give in to one side. The idea to move the park 3 meters in and plant trees to help sound proof are great ideas. We are all apart of this city. It should be a win-win for everyone.

Best regards,
Melissa Van Roie

I believe there is a need for fenced in dog parks. The one built was too close to people's houses so I understand their frustration.

In mississauga there is the best fenced dog park ever. It is at Jack darling park and is built around the water treatment plant. It is the largest dog park in Ontario I think.

Study it and replicate it.
It is best of breed for dog parks

Karen Campbell

To whomever this may concern,

I am contacting you over the recent decision to close down Peter Misersky Park. It is very disappointing that this decision has been made as it is such a positive park for both people and dogs. I bring my dog to this park 4-5 times a week as it helps him to socialize with other dogs and burn energy as just walking him is not enough. It is unfortunate that the park was built in this location in the first place but that was not the fault of the dog owners and their dogs, it was the cities. You are punishing us for utilizing such a positive component of this community as it helps to build inclusivity and friendships.

Additionally, this decision has been made without an additional plan to build a new dog park. The tax payers spent 100,000 dollars (which by the way, is more than it should have cost), to build this dog park, and now is to be removed, costing tax payers more money. You should at the very least keep the dog park open until a new one is constructed, which I believe is the ultimate compromise in this situation.

Thank you for taking time to read this email as I believe this dog park is one of the things that makes Guelph a great city to live in.

Thank you,
Hailey MacDonald

Hello,

As someone who lives in the 35 Mountford condominium property, I have absolutely no problem with the dog park being left open. I am saddened to hear that it is closing as I think it is a great use of green space. I am a supporter of the initiative, even though I don't have a dog. I am a cat person myself. I do think it's great for those in the area to have somewhere to allow their dogs to socialize. Please feel free to use my name as a supporter of the dog park whenever needed.

Thanks,
Steve Dow

I would like to see Misersky park because it brings the community together...even if you don't own a dog you see people around watching all the time.

We have nothing on the East End of Guelph for dogs to play and run together.

Our tax payer's money already spent \$100,000 for the development of the property...how will we get that back?

The only time I have had a negative interaction while being at the park was by one neighbour who just can't seem to mind his business and rally's up other people.

I personally think it's ridiculous to rip out a park that has had such a positive impact.

If this gets voted out it's a waste of so many people's time and taxpayers money.

Carrie Harris

I am messaging you regarding the decision to close and remove the Fenced In Dog Park at Misersky Park at the end of the month.

I bring my dog to this park regularly to get social with other dogs, it allows me to socialize with people in the community in a safe environment off of the streets. The town has needed this for a long time and it is unfortunate that in hindsight council now sees that having it built so close to residential houses is an issue. I have not witnessed dog poop being left behind to make any kind of a smell that some complainants have claimed. I hope that the town changes its mind about removing it since \$100K has already been spent. I would love to know how fencing costs \$100K. There is no real seating or any extras to add to that bill. IF they do decide to proceed with closing it then I would hope you would do it on the concession that it wouldn't be done until an alternate has been established. Don't leave us out in the lurch.

Victoria MacDonald

I understand a vote has been made, but that it is still pending final decision. I'd very much like to speak in favor of keeping the fenced-in dog park as-is and operating.

I have lived in the immediate area for 36 years now, and my aging mother in the same neighborhood as well. In fact, she recently got a dog since the park opened in great part because it was so convenient for her to simply walk there in a few minutes; getting outside, socializing, all while the newest four-legged member of her family does the same, and enjoys his new freedom (he was a rescue animal). To hear of this closing is absolutely heart breaking. My wife and I have a dog who loves the park though he's very small and can't enjoy it on the coldest days of winter, he does absolutely love it. Having moved to the neighborhood with my wife when she and I got married from a small apartment in downtown Toronto was a big

shock to him, but boy does his little tail get wagging something incredible when he hears the word "park".

I've personally gone there just to socialize with people and enjoy the animals running around having a great time - without a pet in tow. I'm absolutely devastated that all the time and money that went into it, is expected to simply be wasted and forgotten over the complaints of a select few. There are literally hundreds of people that come from all around the city to use this park (which I realize is part of the complaint, but more clearly illustrates how desired such a park is, and why more should open, rather than the one we have being closed), and hundreds of dogs love it and enjoy it.

My parents bought the house my mother now resides in forty years ago, with promises from the city that that empty field at the top of the hill was going to have a school built within the next five years. The very school they had intended for me to go to once I was off to kindergarten. That obviously never happened. Ultimately a small park was opened, and a bunch of townhouses were built. Only after I had grown to adulthood did the park get any actual amenities. Unfortunately, nothing in all those years really did my parents and their new family any good. But last year, a dog park has opened. And that has done good for me, still living in the immediate vicinity, and my mother, also in the same neighborhood a great deal of good. My new wife (only three months married now) haven't got a family of our own (yet!), but we do have our little dog. My elderly mother's family has long grown up and moved away (though for me, not far), and she now has a dog. There are five lives that really, truly enjoy the leash-free zone in this park. And five hearts to be crushed to see it closed down.

I would very much like to add my voice and beg our Councillors to reconsider closing the leash-free zone. There may be a few people complaining and doing so in a well-organized fashion, but far, far more people are impacted for the positive by this park's existence, I can assure you. It's one of the few things in the immediate vicinity that regularly draws me out of the house, on foot; and into the community; and we used to need to drive to Cambridge to do it.

Paul Bahry

To whomever it may concern.

I live within a 3 minute walk of this fog park and in have to say it's been amazing to have. Not only is my dog Maxx very happy to go there but so are every other dog that frequents.

I have a hard time understanding why ita being closed as so many people use it. As well as an additional waste of tax payers money to have built athen to have to pay again to remove such an appreciated place.

Removing this dog park will not stop people from using the park for walking and running their dog including myself, I hope the people that want it torn down realize this.

My dog is 10 years old and we've been using this park for 8 years of it.. nothing will change.

Rick Hanlon

Good day,

Thank you for taking the time to read this email.

I am writing to you about the current and planned fenced dog parks in Guelph. In short, we love them so much, and are very excited for the one close to our home to finish being built.

It has been so lovely the past few months to be able to take my dog to the fenced dog park at Peter Mesersky. My pup loves to zoom around and roam freely within the safe confines for the fenced area. She has really come out of shell after meeting so many different dogs and people there. It's fantastic to see her happily wagging tail every time we get close to the park. She clearly loves it there.

For myself, I really appreciate being able to come together with other people, and their pups, and enjoy time together outdoors. I've made new friends, had wonderful conversations, and I always feel very welcome and safe at the dog park.

In speaking to other folks at the fenced dog park at Peter Mesersky, many of us are looking forward to other fenced dog parks being built around town, so we won't have to drive across town to use the one fenced dog park. Once another (or a few!) more fenced parks are up and running, more people will be able to access them too, and the high usage of Peter Mesersky will be spread between it and the other locations.

I really appreciate the efforts the city has made over the past few years to set all of this up, and make this happen, connecting with and asking for input from three citizens. It's really a step in the right direction for Guelph, to increase the usage options of the green spaces, to appeal to more of the Guelph population, and add another way for people to come together. Free access to green space, for recreation, exercise, and social interaction is so important for healthy communities and happy citizens, and that's saying nothing of the happy pups!

I am looking forward to more fenced dog parks in Guelph, and other green initiatives to improve the quality of life of the citizens of Guelph.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Cheers,
Kim Kilpatrick

Hi,

I am writing my disappointment in the closure of Miskery dog park.

This is a park that families use and citizens rather keep both parks which is why I am writing this email.

Thanks,
Alim Nathoo

Hello,

Just passing along my views on the leash free fenced dog park; PLEASE keep it open! I would highly suggest implementing a second leash free fenced dog park, that is bigger and away from residential areas IN ADDITION to Peter Misersky. This should drastically reduce foot traffic at the Peter Misersky park and alleviate some of the issues that presenting. Dog owners NEED a safe place to let dogs run off leash for several reasons. Proper socialization is probably the most crucial element, especially for young dogs that are still in their formative development stages and may not have a good recall yet. This safe socializing environment helps dogs to become good canine neighbours that enhance people's lives and are safe, reliable pets. This benefits the community as a whole, not just the individual owner. Closing the current dog park will also be a huge waste of taxpayer money.

My suggestion: keep Peter Misersky open. Build a better, bigger dog park AWAY from residential areas in summer 2020 which will remove the pressure from the current park. These issues only exist because the demand for this space is so great. At the very least, keep the PM park open until another park can be built.

Thank you for reading.
Katie Trottier

Hi,

I'm writing to ask you to please keep the Miserski dog park. We don't have enough places where our dogs can run free in Guelph.

My dog is too old to join in the fun but it's truly a joy to watch all the dogs playing and running free.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Cobi Demmers

* * *

Please add my name to those that enjoyed the fenced in area for dogs. I have a small dog that normally doesn't get to play and run with smaller dogs. This was a great opportunity for him to make friends and socialize. I made new friends as well.

I really can't chance taking him to an off leash trail because bigger dogs see him and sometimes think RABBIT. Not good. The fenced in area for small dogs is great

Please don't close PM park until you find another suitable location.

Regards,
Lynn Tyler

* * *

To Whom it may concern,

I am a very heavy user of the dog park. I use it everyday if i can depending on weather and if i can get off work in time. My dogs would be crushed to if this park was to close. It would basically be like teasing them, saying look fun and then ripping it away from them and you would not do that to a child so why would you do that to a dog. This is very disheartening that the city would take this away from dogs and dog owners especially after spending upwards of \$100,000. Where is that money going to go now? Down the drain it sounds like if the park gets locked up and the fencing removed. I urge the city to not make a decision that they will come to regret.

Something to keep in mind, if you close this park and the next park comes in 2021, where would it go? there is nowhere not near residential inside the city so it would be on the outskirts of the city which Dog owners will then complain about so its a lose lose situation here. If people are abusing the park like Residents nearby say then lets station a Bylaw officer there occasionally and hand out tickets to owners without dog registration, or that are abusing the rules rather than closing the park.

Thank you,
Michael Wilkins

* * *

Please open the dog park on Bristol Street in Guelph. I need a need a fenced in dog park that I can walk my dog to. I don't drive and really need a close place so he can run free with other dogs and I don't have to worry about him running away or getting lost in the city. This is so very important to have in our fine city. Please save the dog parks and open new ones!!

Michelle Farrow

* * *

Hello,

I am writing to express my support on keeping the Peter Misersky park open. I am a regular visitor of the dog park with my dog. It is a great, safe space for her to run and be socialized with other dogs. I have only met responsible pet owners who are there for the right reasons. They pick up after their dogs, and I've only ever noticed minimal barking. The space appears to be respected and is a great place for community to be brought together. It would be doing a disservice to the city of Guelph to remove the dog park, along with it being a waste of money for it not to exist. I hope you consider this feedback.

Thank you,
Leigh Hardcastle

* * *

Hello

I just wanted to make sure that you are aware the impact closing the dog park and cancelling the other planned parks will have. I have two dogs one is older with a tumor in her nose and the other one is only two. They both love going to the park and getting some socializing and exercise in! The older one (Dakota) likes to socialize with the humans more than other dogs but loves the time there and being off leash and free to roam. The younger one (Nico) loves to socialize with other dogs and to run free. The dog park gives us the chance to make new friends and get out some of his insane amounts energy! The only way he tires out is if he can run! He can outrun almost any dog at the park which means if we try to get his energy out even if we ran with him we wouldn't be able to run fast enough or long enough to wear out his energy. Closing this park will negatively impact us in so many ways. I understand that some people have made very vocal complaints but I don't find they are fully honest. Any time we have been to the park people pick up after their dogs and do their best to keep them decently quiet. The money has already been spent and the park is up I feel that it would be extremely unfair and negatively impact all the dogs and their owners. Please don't close this safe enclosed space for our dogs they deserve a space to run and play with their friends as much as the human children deserve parks and safe areas to enjoy with their friends.

Kayla Robinson

* * *

Mayor Guthrie,

Thank you for reaching out to the dog owners of Guelph. I have been a dog owner in the city since 2014. My biggest complaint about the city was it's lack of leash free fenced dog parks. I would travel to Kitchener, Waterloo, and Cambridge to use theirs when my first dog was young. I used to use the Lee Street park, once he was older. Due to the lack of fencing once a week regular park users would suffer a negative experience, when a group of dogs would run into the kids park, or they would run into someone's backyard. I have used the new park once to three times a day since Peter Misersky opened. I have not seen a dog have a negative experience with a regular park user once. Peter Misersky is used a lot because it is the only one in Guelph. I am not someone who drives across town to use it. I live in the condominium on Mountford Drive. I have lived here since 2011. In 4 months I have met more residents of the condominium because of the dog park, than I had in the previous 9 years. Because of the dog park I have met and made friends with people from all over the city I would never have met. I attended the meeting at the Victoria Road Rec Plex in the fall, but I wasn't aware of a council meeting on the dog park. I hope this affects council's vote at the end of the month. This vote will affect my vote in Oct 2022. Mayor Guthrie, thank you for your support of Guelph's dog owners.

Chad Hagan

Guelph Councillors

Can someone stop this insanity please.

The dog park is no different to facilities provided in other communities. I have personally used one in a small community (Essex) similarly positioned across the road from homes.

It is appreciated and well used.

We have a few people facing the park, likely not dog owners who object to facing the dog park. I understand the owners object to the cars in and out of the provided parking. However, I have used the park many times and observe many people using the parking to enter or visit the homes.

Families that own dogs think of them as family and I have not met one dog owner who does not appreciate a place to let their pet go leash free and enjoy learning some dog social skills.

I can't believe that the money spent to create this space will be wasted and additional expense to dismantle and restore the park to its original situation is even being considered. When there are other dog parks made available around Guelph -

as there are many dog families, things will settle down. There is a need and it must be addressed. So sorry that a few have the power to ruin things for many when there is a real need.

I suggest if these people force a close, make them wait until a new facility can be provided in a "more suitable" space that only drivers can access and won't offend the locals.

Frances Vanover

Please consider this my vote to keep these valuable and necessary facilities in city parks in Guelph and future neighbourhood plans!

It give owners a place to lawfully let their pets off leash so they aren't a nuisance and hazard elsewhere in the neighborhood

Thank you
Cameron Lawrie

Good afternoon.

I just heard that Council has voted to remove the Peter Misersky Dog Park, and I am incredibly saddened. When I moved to Guelph 8 years ago, I was astounded that this small, friendly, apparently 'green' and outdoorsy community did not have a fenced in dog park when so many surrounding communities had them open for years.

At first the lack of a fenced in park didn't bother me too much, because I didn't have a dog myself (yet!). But fast forward a few years, and suddenly the most adorable little rescue dog from the Guelph Humane Society came into my life. A little wiener/pug named Faroe saved me, and my son, at a time when we desperately needed companionship, loyalty, silliness and love. Faroe is a social butterfly, and she loves to meet, play, and chase all-the-dogs, in addition to touching the hearts of all the Dog Moms and Dads along the way.

When the Peter Misersky park was finally opened, I was ecstatic that I could finally give my best friend the social time she deserved, and in a safe environment within the city of Guelph. She could finally check all the pee-mail messages that have been inaccessible for so long! She could finally meet all her doggie friends in a safe and leash-free environment. She didn't feel threatened because of the constraints of her leash, which meant that her behaviour was so different at the park. She was relaxed and care-free. Isn't that what every dog deserves?

The total bonus part of the fenced in dog park is the sense of community I feel when I am there. I love to meet all Dog Moms and Dads. I love to hear their

stories and share in our love and admiration for Man's (and Woman's!) best friend. Do you know how many dog rescuers, dog walkers, dog sitters, dog trainers, dog lovers, and doggie doggers there are in Guelph? So many! Guelph is filled with dog people. I love that I can share my ridiculous obsession with dogs with so many like minded people.

Please keep the park! I understand that it isn't perfect. Perfection is the enemy of progress. Just because it isn't perfect doesn't mean that all progress should be abandoned. I've always been taught to learn from my mistakes, not abandon something because it isn't perfect. There are ways to turn mistakes into valuable lessons. That is how we learn. Take the time to make a plan for the next park(s). Set defined stipulations and parameters for the new parks that will only help you succeed, and move forward knowing what you know now. But please DO NOT remove the progress that has been made, because there are far more people in favour of it than there are against it. Guaranteed!

My dog Faroe thanks you all for reading this long message. She told me she'd give me extra kisses and cuddles if she could continue to play at Peter Misersky for longer, until all of you at city hall have figured out the other options. She would even love to come and visit you at city hall if you want a break from the daily grind.

Kind regards,

Tricia Glassco
(mom to the best wiener-pug DAUG on this planet, Faroe)

I think this dog park should remain open for all the many dog owners in Guelph. Dogs need an area to run since there is a dog leash law in Guelph. There will always be neighbours to complain and you can't please everyone. They will get over it.

Penny Millar

Good evening,

This is in regards to the dog park located by the condominiums at Mountford dr.

Im saddened to hear about the possible closure of this park. I am a resident in the adjacent condominiums and am a dog owner myself. I love taking my dog here to play with friends, gain new friendships in the community and I'm saddened to know that this issue all steamed from a local resident in my complex who has an issue with this park. This resident has harassed dog owners by blocking off parking spots that aren't his with pylons, shinning a very bright light into dog owners eyes to deter them away. Yelled and swore at locals just trying to enjoy this park in peace.

This park has brought the community together, dogs together and I'm ashamed of how a fellow neighbour has not been very welcoming in this matter. This person has made the complaint that he bought the house knowing it was on a quiet end of the street to be peaceful, but the city owned park in front of his house was here before the house was built. He knew going into this house ownership that there is a chance of people "enjoying" the green space. All the media attention this person has created, has people even who don't live near the park asking for it to be closed.

I know this person is going to be at this meeting while this is being read, and I surely hope you understand what this has caused in your community among fellow neighbours and dog owners. Sad you have to ruin the enjoyment of others. If you want the peace and quiet away from civil life, there are plenty of houses for sale outside of city limits where you can enjoy that.

Next I think I won't be allowed to let my kids play in the park next to you, might be laughing too loud and too many friendships being made.

Nathan Bassutti

* * *

Hi there,

I'd just like to tell you how cruel and unfair closing and cancelling the dog parks in Guelph is—especially to people who may be in a position similar to me.

You see, I have severe PTSD and acute agoraphobia has manifested as a symptom of the trauma. Trying to get my dogs out to the dog park in Cambridge/Kitchener had become nearly impossible as I let my condition go undiagnosed and untreated (by the way, you guys need to really work on mental health access, too. It probably shouldn't take four and a half years to find even one therapist that one feels comfortable with and who is capable of treating severe diagnoses, but I'm getting off topic with that)

Since I found out about the Misersky Park dog park, I was elated and surprised at how often I was able to go. Not very often compared to a healthy individual, but night and day compared to Maple Grove.

It is a lot easier to get in the car and drive 5 minutes to the park than it is to do so for a twenty minute drive. The prospect of having to make that drive is what defeats me almost all of the time.

While I was disappointed that the planners behind Misersky weren't smart enough to install artificial turf designed specifically for use in high pet traffic areas, or to put waste disposal INSIDE the park's perimeter, and while the lack of benches made it extremely hard with physical injuries hampering my ability to even just stand and watch the dogs, I was still so grateful to have a dog park so close to help both me and my dogs.

The park wasn't perfect, but it was more than good enough to bring my dogs to. I feel like I am being punished by your decision all because I have to struggle with a physically debilitating and emotionally exhausting mental illness.

Why are you punishing me?

Angelica S.

Good evening,

I am sending this email in regards to recent talk of shutting down the dog park due to complaints. The dog park was a great addition to the community and gives dogs and owners the opportunity to socialize and enjoy the outdoors. Taking it away would be a great loss for everyone. The other off-leash walking areas that are not fences are less safe for dogs who want to run but may not be fully trained or anxious. The Hanlon off-leash park has been implicated in a number of cases of dogs getting drug toxicity from joints being left on the ground.

The time to raise concerns over the addition of a dog park was before it was built and the idea was first proposed. Taking it away now would be costing the city extra money and ruining a good thing.

I hope you take the time to consider our side of things before shutting it down. Or at least consider relocation.

Thank you,
Jessica Reeves

Good evening,

I am a Ward 1 resident and my pup and I use the fenced dog park at Peter Misersky almost daily. It has been such a wonderful space for her to socialize with other dogs and to get out lots of puppy energy in a safe, enclosed space.

I am incredibly disappointed to hear that the very vocal complaints of a few have led to city council to vote to close down the park and stop all construction or plans for future dog parks. I understand the frustration of the residents who live beside the park - it is truly unfortunate that they were not consulted before the park was built. But I do not feel that they have portrayed the park fairly at all. Yes, it does get loud sometimes. But any barking is never constant and is during daylight hours. The children in the adjacent playground as well as all of the school announcements from the high school down the hill are also sporadically noisy. If people were actually using the dog park after hours as is being claimed, those of us who

regularly use the dog park would be up in arms about this! I would be very interested to know what by-law has said about any calls that have come in from residents beside the park, what time the calls came in, what by-law officers actually found when investigating. It is very possible as well that dog noise could have come from someone simply walking their dog through the area, rather than using the dog park late at night. Or the noise could have been from the numerous dogs who live at the homes that back on to the park - most mornings when the dog park is quiet, there is a lot of barking from those backyards. I am also perplexed at complaints about the smell of the park - if there was a concern about smell, believe me, park users would be complaining about it too. The vast majority of dog owners who frequent the dog park are respectful of the space, and it is an incredible shame to let a few (if truthfully any) bad experiences as well as the loud opinions of adjacent residents ruin this entire project for the many, many people who love the park.

If it were possible to keep the existing park, perhaps it would be worth considering putting in a line of cedar trees to buffer some of the sound? (The proposal to move the edge of the park further from the parking lot will do very little for sound - like I said, the sound can travel, to the point that park users in the parking lot can clearly hear the morning announcements from the catholic high school on Victoria Road). Putting down either wood chips or gravel in the park to cut down on the mud when the ground is wet would also be a great idea come spring (grass really can't survive with the level of use the park currently gets).

If moving the park is the only option, please consider keeping Peter Misersky open until the other park(s) are built. Plus the more parks Guelph could have, the less busy each park will be. Of course Peter Misersky is so busy right now - it's the only option! Residents come from all areas of Guelph to access it - I've met people from literally all parts of the city. I have also heard that Eastview Park was considered as an option for a fenced dog park. This would be a great location, far enough away from residential area, lots of parking etc. but that the plans are already set and a dog park could not go in without something else being scrapped. Well, consider the use that a dog park will get. Every day of the year. Then consider some of the other things going in at the park. Now, I realize that splash pads can only be used in the summer, but they are also incredibly popular (as I'm sure city council is aware) - I don't think that the plans for that should be cut. But what about reconsidering the beach volleyball area? Again, this is an area that can only be used in the summer, and I am certain that it would get far less use than a splash pad or a dog park. It would be nice to have it all, but if something had to go, that would be my vote.

So many dog owners have come to rely on Peter Misersky park for their dogs, and really it has become a great little community. I look forward to seeing many of the same dogs and owners each morning when we arrive. I have not personally witnessed any poor behaviour by any park users, and like I said, I'm there almost everyday (sometimes twice a day). If someone was misusing the park, you can bet the other dog park users would be saying something - we all love this space and do not want to see it destroyed. Guelph is such an amazing city for green space and outdoor-friendly activities - it is hard to believe that there is at present only a single fenced park for dogs, and that it is now in jeopardy.

I would truly appreciate these views, as well as the views of other dog park users who love the space, to be heard as loudly as the critics of the park.

Thank you for your consideration,
Andy Timmerman

Good Evening,

I would like to submit my support for fenced in dog parks to city council.

We have been driving from the west end to Peter Misersky park because it has added such great value to our dog's life - our Husky now has a safe space to run and socialize. We have been there at least a dozen times and have witnessed nothing but good etiquette and respect for neighbours. For most of our visits there have been fewer than 6 dogs using the space.

As far as noise, I live in a house that backs onto Deerpath park and the basketball courts bring plenty of noise until after midnight most nights. But I would never consider complaining as I see it as part of living in an urban community space, and I get much enjoyment and use out of the park's amenities. The benefits far outweigh any negatives, and I am glad the kids are keeping busy and active playing basketball.

I sincerely hope you will keep the current dog park, and build the next one planned for the west end.

Many thanks,
Amy Moffat

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to plead with the City of Guelph to please keep the Peter Misersky dog park open! I will understand the need to close it once the new one is built in 2021, but until it is our dogs need a place to run and play and socialize safely.

Your consideration is appreciated.

Sincerely,
Tara Burton
Dog Lover and Resident of Guelph

Good evening,

I am writing to you today as a very disappointed Guelph resident and dog owner. I have been reading articles across several news outlet and I am shocked to hear of the possible closure of Peter Misersky Park. I have recently begun training/fostering a dog that will hopefully one day go on to become an Autism Service Dog for a child. Myself, and several other trainers within my company, utilize this dog park almost daily for crucial training, exercise, and socialization of the dogs. These activities are only 100% safe within a fenced in area, and are not allowed to occur off-leash in an unfenced area (as per our contract). As previously mentioned, I utilize this facility daily and without a fenced in backyard myself I have no where to turn to for proper off-leash exercise and training.

I believe it is a disservice to the community to remove the only fenced in dog park within Guelph. Without a doubt the decision to close the dog park is an extreme waste of taxpayer money, resources, and time, especially without near future plans of a new facility. I completely understand that the location of the dog park is not ideal, given it is in a residential area. However, simply closing the dog park and leaving dog owners without any other option is absolutely unacceptable. I am hoping you can understand that allowing the dog park to remain open until a new location has been determined is the only viable option. Additionally, council should understand that it is their wrongdoing in terms of the dog parks current location, therefore it is unfair to punish dog owners by outright removing the park completely.

I genuinely hope that Peter Misersky dog park remains open for myself, and the hundreds of other dog owners and their dogs in the city who genuinely need this facility. I hope council takes the above considerations into their decision making process.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration,
Paula Zimmermann

Not having available/accessible fenced spaces for owners to take their dogs to safely run around and exercise and interact is an important service greatly lacking in this city. If you vote to close the Misersky dog park and stop all plans for future dog parks that would be an absolute waste of time, money and a much need service for many residents of this city.

Please find a way to responsibly move forward.

Desiree Kendrick

Good morning,

I'm emailing in regards to the recent decision to close the east end fenced in dog park and cancel the others.

As a responsible dog owner, I can't tell you how disappointing this is. There is an enormous community of dog owners in this City and this is an amenity that is needed.

I strongly feel that opening the other two planned locations would ease a lot of pressure on the east end dog park and resolve a lot of the issues (parking/noise).

Dog owners in this city need a safe place to let their dogs socialize and exercise.

I implore you not to let a few disgruntled citizens, mainly Mr. Farley, ruin this for thousands of responsible dog owners and reconsider your decision.

Kind regards,
Fabio Enriquez

I vote to keep the dog park open and keep the one on Bristol street coming!
Thank you.

Alison LeDrew

Hello,

This email is in regards to the potential closure of the Bristol St Dog Park and I would like to voice against that. I have already voted against it but would like to express the need for a fully-fenced dog park in the area. Although a few residents are upset with the location there are many more residents of Guelph with dogs who would be very happy with a fully-fenced dog park. Having a park in a residential area is beneficial to those using it for it's accessibility. I personally do not drive and it is difficult to get my dog to a dog park within walking distance. Many other dog owners feel the same and wish to see this park stay open.

Thank you,
Rebecca Hest

Hi there,

I'm a border collie momma who loves her dog as if it was her own child. After having my dog attacked while at a pet store I've been so cautious as to where I bring my baby.

I've worked at campus estates animal hospital, and I've seen dog attacks from being on leash on the street.

This park is designated for owners whom know they're dogs behaviour and that off leash activities with supervision is perfect to allow their dogs to get the exercise and socialization they desperately need to become well adjusted dogs.

This park has been my saving grace. We go every Saturday and Sunday afternoon, never have I ever witness any misconduct from owners or animals. People are all pet loving, and friendly, dogs get to run around and be dogs!!

With the news worthy coyote spottings at the Hanlon off leash dog spot, owners haven't been bringing their babies there is fear.

We need this park.

We don't disgrace this park, all owners pick up after their dogs. There is no yelling, if anything the kids at the park make way more noise than the humans and animals in the fenced in area!!

Spending as much as you did for this spot for your Guelph dog owners, and to threaten to rid of it due to the people living in the area wanting more parking space is OUTRAGEOUS. I live downtown and have no parking. So I park my car 3 blocks away and walk to my home! Don't see me complaining!

Please reconsider for us. I beg of you.

Thank you
Erica Dunsmoor

Hello,

I am a concerned resident of Guelph, writing to you to express my desire for the Peter Misersky Dog Park to remain open. Guelph needs at least one fenced in dog park, (preferably more!!) in a city of this size. This one needs to remain open and the other two need to go forward with construction.

The decision to close this park, and stop plans for the other two that have been proposed, would be extremely foolish.

Melissa Goetz

Good evening,

I am emailing in regards to the full fenced dog park. I just wanted to express how thankful I am that Guelph finally opened a fully enclosed park where I can allow my dogs to run off leash. I know there has been talks of closing them and I think this is

a terrible idea as there is a need and want for enclosed dog parks in Guelph, which the current dog park along the Hanlon express way is not satisfying.

I'm asking to please reconsider your decision and to allow some more time. It's an established neighborhood and I understand the resistance to change, so all I'm asking is for council to allow more time to work through the growing pains rather than jumping straight to closure.

Thank you for your time
Brittany Hulme

I believe this dog park should be removed and the entire process deserves more consultation and thought. A shame so much money was expended with such a poor outcome.

Christina Tourangeau

Hello.

I'm One small voice. I am an animal lover and have lived in many cities in Ontario. I have travelled abroad extensively. Nowhere else have I had the negative experiences with dogs that I've unfortunately experienced in Guelph over the past 10 yrs I've lived here. I've been chased by so many dogs while walking or jogging; dog owners that don't leash properly or control their dogs safely is a dangerous issue.

I realize I am one small voice but thought I would advocate for not only no more dog parks but a greater education campaign about the need to safely walk and leash your dog so that all the citizens of Guelph can feel safe.
Thank you for your time.

Sincerely
Amy

I recently have become aware that the Peter Misersky dog park is being closed. I am a local resident, a street over from this park. I have been taking my dog to this park since November and have never once witnessed a complaint, smelled anything overwhelming or any litter around the fence line. It's obvious that there is going to be a some opposed to closure and those for. I want to express why it should stay.

My dog loves to run, she is a breed that runs fast and loves to socialize. This park gave her that opportunity. She doesn't have the best recall when distracted by other dogs but it's also about her safety. Areas that are unfenced are never going

to be safe especially when traffic is so close by. There are ways to make both parties happy. This gets me out and makes my girl happy.

Why not move the fence line and add trees? (As proposed before in the tribune) Dogs bark so that can't be helped but dogs also bark in backyards, many of them on Leacock. Most of the noise is from them seeing dogs in the park. If it's about parking, post signs where people can and can't park, post time limits? So add a bushy tree line for dogs to be out of sight?

There has to be compromise, closing isn't compromise!

Thanks
Katie Holmes

I am voting to keep this beautiful feature open. I have been over there multiple times as a bystander (not with dogs) and never noticed any loud noise or parking issues. I was there on all days of the week too and it was always the same.

I also live near lee st and would love to see the dog park continued there.

Thank you
Amy Vowels

My friend and myself created the Facebook group Dogs of Guelph which has grown exponentially over the last two years. It's a wonderful place for everyone to come together for just about anything in our dog community. There has been a lot of positive feedback. Please for the sanity of hundreds of us, we are so tired of hearing all the back and forth on this topic. We deserve the park and so do our dogs. All the time and money that has already gone into this is crazy. So, please, keep the park up and move forward with this project.

Cassidy Chambers

Please don't close the current fenced in dog park until you build a new one. It's not fair to be punishing dogs and dog owners. We are all tax payers and the dog owner community is being treated unfairly. We should not pay for the mistake that the city made by not consulting the residence of Peter Misersky Park.

Thank you,
Barbara Harcourt

To whom it may concern,

I would really hope some common sense could prevail in this issue and rethink the knee-jerk reaction to a select portion of the population. If you do this what is next? Preventing kids from playing on swings as laughter is too loud. Exiling families from having picnics because their lunch creates garbage in trash bins. Eliminating sports from all playgrounds due to cheering parents and the noise of a ball going through the air and what about Guelph being a green community? The plan is to look at putting these parks in non-residential areas, does that not mean users of these facilities will now have to load their dogs into a vehicle and drive to a park. Then parking lots will need to be developed and paid for!

Let's try and be smart and look for an agreeable option. Parks are for everyone not the select few that live beside them! For the record, I am a dog owner that does not use the parks but understands the value these have.

Dave Strobl

Caving under pressure is not the answer. Was excited for the one to open by the skate park. Why cancel them all??

Tom Post

I am sending this email to express my sadness and disgust to councils potential decision to close this dog park and not build the other two at Bristol and Lee parks.

These parks are needed in these communities which is clear considering the uproar from other citizens. The fact that the proposed changes that were supposed to be discussed February 3rd by council were not and this knee-jerk response by June Hofland just to silence one arrogant man is ridiculous.

Please do not waste anymore taxpayer money on this and proceed with the changes outlined in the proposal as those make sense.

You can count on it that many dog owners will be present on February 24th at city hall.

Sincerely,

Darija Nelson
Dog owner and resident of Ward 3

As former president of a dog park association, I thank you for the recent closing/canceling the off leash areas. They are a magnet for untrained and unsocialized animals. I have seen normal play time ruined by the arrival of just 1 dog. You can usually tell when that type of dog is coming near the park, but you

will never get the owner to acknowledge the issue. I have seen everything from squabbles, and fights to deaths caused by poor owners. It is bad enough walking a dog on leash here in Guelph, thank you for eliminating some of these places.

Shawn Killeleagh

* * *

Hello Clerks:

I was quite dismayed to hear that Peter Misersky Fenced Leash Free might be closed. So many want these facilities; very few do not. Perhaps there were some measurements misaligned for the Peter Misersky Park but to cancel it entirely including the future proposed Fenced Leash Free is a case of "throwing the baby out with the bathwater"and expensive.

Guelph is a special city. I retired here absolutely on purpose. Having a Fenced Leash Free was the "cherry on the cake" for the great reasons for living here. Why such a progressive City would cancel another great idea to accommodate their citizens is beyond my understanding.

I can list all the good reasons for keeping the Fenced Leash Free but I would be just reiterating the same points I made in the first survey. I think you know all the reasons.

Please reconsider and keep the Peter Misersky Fenced Leash Free and build more for the citizens of Guelph.

Thanks you.

Barbara Miller

* * *

Hello,

Just wanted to show support for the fenced in dog park in Guelph (Peter Misersky) it really helps for socializing dogs that are unable to run on their own, including my own pup. If it ends up closing I hope there will be another opening up.

Thanks,
Nicole Ross

* * *

Don't close the dog park please!
I don't have a car and it's the only place I can let my dog off leash!

Maggie Horst

* * *

Good Morning,

I am emailing you to voice my opinion on the closing of the Dog Park. I firmly believe in keeping it open. I am a new dog owner and CAN NOT stress enough how much we need a dog park and more than one. I have met so many other dog owners and have had the opportunity to play and get to know their dogs as well. I was very afraid of letting my dog in a confined area at first. All these thoughts went through my head of dogs could be aggressive, but it had turned out to be a great experience and was so happy that they opened a dog park. Even we have encountered that a dog doesn't really get along with my dog and barks at him. We have worked together to have the dogs get along. It is a work in progress as we are not always there at the same time. But when we do end up there at the same time we alternate letting the dogs get their play time in. My Koda has grown up so much and has learnt so many good things with his visits at the park. All the dog owners are very respectful of the rules and watch their dogs. It is a great place for dogs to get their energy out not to mention it a great place for people who have limited time or ability to always walk their dog. Here you know you are safe environment not only for yourself but your dog as well. As I could never take my dog to an off leash as he would just go to whatever grabs his attention be it people, rabbits or other dogs. This is a safe place for him and CAN NOT stress enough how important it is to have these parks. I was shocked that there was no posting at the dog park for any meeting or that there was no discussion about the dog park. I believe we need more than one park as I have met people from all parts of the city having to go to that one. I even met one lady that was visiting and she was thrilled that she could take her little corgi to a park to play. With more than one park open it would take the stress off of everyone migrating to the one park. There is a great need for these parks. I often ask is it fair to close down the park. Would we close down a play structure because kids are loud and screaming having fun or if their space was a hang out for drugs or other activities. No we would all pull together to make it a safe environment so why shouldn't we give that to our dogs. I live across from a park and I can tell you the language from some of the other kids while playing basketball isn't acceptable behaviour but I know the need for kids to expel their energy and be kids while they can. I VOTE FOR THE DOG PARK TO STAY OPEN and open another one or two. I have also made my co workers aware of the shutting down and they will be responding as well.

Thank you for giving us the chance to be heard.
Kiara Tennis

* * * *

Hi there,

I am emailing to petition the closing of the Peter misersky dog park off of mountford. My dog loves it there and we abide by all the rules. If we could not close it that would be great!!

If there's anything else you need please let me know.

Best,
Erin Tusa

* * *

Hello,

I would like to express my concerns about closing the dog park. First off, \$100,000 of tax payer money will be wasted. The park has already been built. Please don't waste our hard earned money. This is a great location for a park because there are many dogs in the neighborhood. Secondly, the city should find a way to make the situation better because there are more people that like the park than the handful it negatively impacts. Thirdly, the dogs need a place to play and socialize with the safety of a fenced in area that is easy to get to. There are already limited places that dogs can go. Puppies can learn to socialize in the park. Some dogs run away but that doesn't mean they don't deserve somewhere to go. Lastly, people with physical challenges whom own dogs need a place for their dogs to go to. I've personally seen a man that regularly goes to the park that has a tough time walking his dog. He and others who have a physical challenges deserve this space.

Above all the dogs LOVE the park. If you watched the dogs play, I hope you'd see how happy they are and change your mind about closing the park.

Thank you for taking the time to read my email.

Sincerely,
Peter Traplin

* * *

Hi there,

Just sending an email to voice how good the fenced in dog parks are-- i heard word that they may be removed in Guelph and it made me pretty upset! please don't take them away from our furry babies.

Thanks so much for all you do,

Janine Finlay

* * *

I wish give my support fenced in dog parks we need more not less.

Doug Watson

Hello,

Just yesterday I heard that the city plans to possibly shut down the Peter Misersky dog park and I think that is a horrible idea. I use this park quite frequently as my pup loves to go there to play with other dogs and it's great exercise. He gets to run around off leash in a contained area and have fun and exert his energy there rather than in my house. It's great place for both dogs and humans to be able to meet each other and become more of a community. Anytime I have been there people are respectful and we even let each other know if their dog has gone to the washroom without them seeing (we hate abandoned poop to). Just yesterday I was talking to another dog owner who happens to live in the complex across the road where people or a person is complaining. He goes for a walk every night and has never seen people there late at night playing with their dog. I for one think that is the most ridiculous complaint, who does that, seriously? And as for the noise, I have hardly heard a dog bark there. And if they do it's not for long. Do these people also complain about the kids screaming having fun tobogganing? If they do that's pretty pathetic of them. I know there's another park beside highway 6. That park has no fences, there are coyotes around, and drug users go there to do their thing a leave the paraphernalia when they're done. It being an "off leash" park with no fences and trees everywhere with long grass it's hard to see what your pup is getting into all the time. Just last week a few dogs were admitted to the vet because they found the drug paraphernalia and some how consumed it. If you're going to take this park down the city better take better care and make sure that the only off leash dog park isn't going to harm our dogs. I'm quite upset the city has decided to shut this park down. Has the city actually done a survey on the people in that complex to see how many are upset about this park? Spend more of the tax payers money to take down the 100,000 dollar fence the city just put up around the park. Just put trees up or something at the front of the park, so the grumpy people that don't want to have fun can sit in their home and look at the trees rather than complain about people having fun and ruining it for everyone.

Thanks
Andrew Pedersen

Good afternoon,

I am writing to provide my support for the construction of new, and management of current, fenced in dog parks in the Guelph community.

Dog parks are an excellent place to socialize your dog with other dogs of all ages, breeds and sizes, as well as people! Adequate socialization is very important for dogs, and prevents them from growing up afraid to approach other dogs, people, and/or approaching them with aggression. Sure, there are designated fields we can use to socialize on in 'off-hours/seasons' but they are not fenced in. This is a huge

concern when following lost-dog prevention processes. Additionally, passerbyers without dogs, do not always appreciate off-leash dogs in their community parks.

Dog parks provide a wonderful opportunity for mental and physical stimulation. I personally, have a very active, high-energy dog that requires a lot of exercise daily. It just isn't possible to give him the kind of exercise he needs, without allowing him to run off-leash; even better if other dogs are around to play. 3 long walks a day, will never compare to the opportunity an off-leash dog park provides to run around.

Lastly, dog parks provide an extra level of safety in the community. A space away from people walking by, cars/motor vehicles driving by, bikes, etc.that provide both dog owners and community members a sense of security. People are less likely to have their dogs off-leash in prohibited areas, if they have safe spaces in their local community to make use of.

I do however, suggest the 'rules' of the dog park be updated to match surrounding municipalities. For example, prohibiting dogs that are not spayed/neutered, is very important to dog park safety. Having in-tact dogs at the park, causes fights. This very simple update in the rules, will increase safety tenfold, and is enforced at almost all dog parks in surrounding communities. People with dogs that do not like other dogs, rescues that haven't been socially tested, etc. should obviously not use the park. There are many responsible dog owners with friendly dogs that use the parks daily, and you will be hurting this entire community of people AND their dogs.

I understand there has been some controversy regarding the placement of the dog parks in the community. You will never make everyone happy, never. Sure, taking them away would make some community members happy, but all the while making another large group of people unhappy. It will also encourage people to use other spaces to let their dogs run off-leash, causing the concerns that fenced-in dog parks are addressing. Cancelling the project is not the answer, not to mention a huge waste of taxpayer money. Please, be sensible, and do not let a man that wrongfully harassed people day-in and day-out for using a park for its intended purpose, that taxpayer money funded and the city planned, be the catalyst of this project. Dogs are a huge part of the Guelph community, and having safe spaces that are locally accessible, is very important.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any further questions.

Thank you for your time and understanding,
Jaime Drohan-Luttmann

* * *

The closing of the one and only fenced dog park in the city is absolutely ridiculous. The nearby residents had plenty of time to voice concerns and complaints before and during construction and if they didn't receive action then, then they should not be able to now. The city made its decision and spent tax dollars on this park and it would be a waste of everyone's time and money to close it.

I understand the residents have raised concerns about parking and noise, however the parking was never intended for the residents use, it was always intended for the pre-existing park.

The noise is another issue that is essentially non-existent. Yes, dogs bark, but the park is only open during daylight hours - hours that do not carry heavy noise restrictions - and the decibel levels within the nearby homes are likely not exceeding the excessive noise level. Has the city done any testing within the nearby homes to prove otherwise?

To shut down the park would not only be a massive waste of funds, but it would say that the City of Guelph does not care about the dogs or their owners who rely on the space to exercise their pets.

Caving to resident protests after the money has been spent and the park opened, is an admission of council's total disregard for responsible city spending.

Nicole Visentin

Dear whomever it may concern,

I believe you should keep the leash-free park for dogs as there are few places owners can let their dogs free (in a safely fenced area). It's for the community and the users of the park enjoy it, isn't that what it is for? Other cities and towns have many fenced in parks and people learn the rules and use the park appropriately. People who don't like it just don't need to use it.

I foster a lot of dogs so I don't like to let them off leash in places I know they can just run away if scared and the fences in park lets them express themselves in a social environment without being able to run into dangerous situations out of my reach.

Please keep the park
Keely Patterson

Hello,

I have heard news that there are now plans to close Peter Misersky park and halt other off-leash areas around Guelph.

This is why I'm submitting my opinion on the matter. Guelph needs areas for dogs to run OFF-LEASH. My dog, and I'm sure many others, will not have sufficient quality of life by walking them on a 5 foot leash at all times.

If you permanently close these parks, alternative options should be made. Open some trails to off leash areas or something equivalent, especially in the north end. At least the south end has the Hanlon park, however this is so inconvenient for those of us in the north.

But, truly, these parks should just remain open. I have a bus stop right beside my house. Children yell and scream every morning and I haven't complained because children in cities and subdivisions is a fact of life. Dogs are the same and why are dog owners at so much more of a disadvantage in this town? We have to beg for areas to play and then a few bitter home owners can just take that away?

There is a survey on thatguelph.ca that already has over 400 votes to keep this park open:



Please reconsider and give this city the resources it needs for ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS.

Thanks for listening,
Dana Vadala

To the Guelph City Council,

I am writing to express my displeasure with the decision to close Misersky Dog park and halt construction on two other dog parks within the city limits.

My family moved to Guelph five years ago with our elderly dog. We didn't seek out dog parks at that time as she wasn't particularly keen on them, and she didn't need a lot of high-energy exercise in the last years of her life.

After she passed away, we adopted a bonded pair of dogs, both one year old. It did not even occur to us that the same city that housed OVC would not have even one fully fenced off leash park.

As we got to know the dogs, we knew didn't want to take them to the Hanlon park, as it is not fully fenced and directly beside a busy parkway. Further searches for Guelph fenced off leash dog parks turned up nothing. We ended up driving to Kitchener whenever we wanted to visit a fenced dog park, which is ridiculous.

Please do not close the fenced dog park until you have actually opened an alternative for people who are in the position that I was two years ago. I know now that my dogs will not run off, so I can avail myself of the tiny strip of grass that is designated as "off leash" at Mole Hill park (directly adjacent to an open play area for toddlers and a busy parking lot.) My dogs can wander back and forth while joggers who don't realize that this little patch of land is designated as off leash yell at me for letting my dogs run freely.

Sincerely,
Alison Hunter Stewart

I read on CTV News this morning that the Committee has recently voted to close the Peter Misersky dog park but that the final decision will be made February 24. I want to express my concern to Council.

While I agree that there should have been public consultation prior to opening the dog park, now that it is there (and being actively used) a few people's complaints should not cause its closure without first having public consultation or at minimum an attempt to mitigate the cause of the complaints/concerns of the neighbours. The report did not specify what those complaints are but I am certain there are likely solutions.

IMHO fenced in Dog Parks are a great thing for a neighbourhood. It provides a healthy environment for dogs to get exercise and encourages human social interaction; which is sorely needed in our world these days. My experience at dog parks has been wonderful. Unwinding while chatting with like minded animal lovers with a built in icebreaker (eg. "oh what a cute dog, what breed is he?") has been a great way to overcome social anxiety, reduce stress and spend time outdoors.

Though I do not live near there, I know from experience being able to walk to a dog park is a wonderful thing. Having to drive to a park is discouraging to many people - and dogs who don't like car rides.

I hope Council will reconsider this closure. Thank you.

Dawn Burnett

Mayor and Council Members,

I am writing in support of the removal of the dog park in Peter Misersky Park. I live within site of the dog park.

Parking is a large issue of why I support the removal of this park. There are only a limited amount of spaces and they aren't just for the dog park, they're also for the kids park, soccer field, skating rink, community garden etc.

This also causes congestion on the access Hadati Road. People are parking on both sides of the curve at the bottom of the hill creating a hazard on the street.

(See attached video, car almost getting hit trying to back out of driveway).

Off Leash; people let their dogs off the leash as soon as they come into close area to the park, on the sidewalk and into walking up the hill. Just this morning at first glance out the window a lady walking her dog off leash into the park, its not just sometimes.

Dogs go running off, and with the kids area close by its just a matter of time before we see more incidents with dog/children.

Tobogganing Hill:

For years this had been the ONLY tobogganing hill anywhere close to the neighbourhood. Many days after school and weekends with kids playing and having fun is no longer happening. My daughter is heartbroken. You can't toboggan into a fence...

Community Input:

There was a total lack of support from the community and neighbouring community where you have placed this dog park. It went up quickly and not alot of feedback.

Dog howling:

The dogs are going crazy, the noise is so loud, getting the neighbourhood dogs into a day long bark fest is really hard for my husband who has to sleep during the days.

The smell:

Oh man what is that smell? When the wind is blowing down the hill, it comes right into our home, wet dog, urine poopy smell. I can't even enjoy open windows in the spring now as I couldn't this fall.

I fully support the closure of this park.

Thank you for your time,
Amanda Scott

Please let there be designated dog parks! In a city of this size, with so many dogs, we really need them!

Jessie Baynham

I am writing to ask that you consider keeping the dog park at Misersky park open, and continue with plans to build more dog parks (particularly the Bristol st park).

With the opening of new parks, there will be less users at the current park. This will lead to less traffic, noise and mess.

Our city is in desperate need of fenced dog parks.

Thank you,
Tara McIntyre Herne

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing today in support of keeping the PM park open and finishing the construction of the Bristol park location. I live in the apartment complex across from Bristol park and we were very excited for the park to go in. Our dog is a hound who doesn't have recall so the only time he can be off leash is in enclosed areas. These fenced parks are the only way he can get the freedom to socialize and play with other dogs off leash. I know a lot of complaints from residents near the PM park location had to do with the increase of traffic to that area, having a second park location would deal with that issue completely. I've spoken with several dog owners in my area that currently drive to PM park to use that facility while waiting for the Bristol location to be finished. PM park showed how much facilities like this are needed for this city so please take this into consideration when making your decision at the end of the month.

Regards

Taylor Sugden

While I am sympathetic and understand that there has been issues with the dog park at Peter Miserky Park.

I do not believe this should cause the immediate closure of the dog park.
I feel like increased enforcement of the rules and strict hours of use would be the more appropriate way to deal with the issues that have come about.

Furthermore would not adding more dog parks not itself alleviate some of the issues at Peter Miserky?

To fully stop the construction of other sites seems harsh.

Increased consultation sure but completely stopping seems wrong.

Thank you for the opportunity,

Ryan Bannon

Good Afternoon,

I am writing you to voice my opinion on the closing of the DOG PARK. I feel it is extremely important to have the dog park remain open. I am a new dog owner and it has been a wonderful outlet for our family dog. He has had so much fun meeting new dogs. It has also been beneficial to him for socializing and behaviour improvement. He gets excited that he is literally pulling us across the field to get to play with the other dogs. It is a safe place for dogs to interact with each other. I do understand why the location isn't the best place but you should of opened more than one for starters at the same time, so people wouldn't migrate from all parts of the city to enjoy. That would surely alleviate some concerns. But if you proceed to close it, in my opinion it was a waste of money and time. As you can see even in rain or shine or snow that dog park is extremely important and needed. It helps everyone. It get used. Build another before considering closing the best thing that has made the dogs really happy.

Sincerely,
Sammy Ageil

Hello,

My name is Caleigh Sprague and am a citizen of Guelph, I work here with homeless youth.

I am beyond saddened, upset and disappointed to hear the plan to close the existing dog park and not follow through with the other 2.

My partner and I moved to Guelph 2 1/2 years ago from Toronto for work. When we first moved we were sad to see there was no fenced dog park. Living in Toronto and having a beagle boxer mix dog, dog parks made having a high energy dog possible. We ended up renting a house to get a yard. We struggled financially, tried

to get roommates but in the end realized we were stretched too thin, we thought we might have to leave Guelph.

What a massive relief it was to find out a fenced dog park was open and two more coming. For a dog like ours it is SO important he gets an area to run and play. Walks simply are not enough. Being a beagle he could run off in a large area like the Hanlon, fenced parks are a must.

We specifically looked for apartments near the dog parks since we share between two of us and needed to be able to walk to these parks. We found a place a 5min walk from the Bristol site (at the time we thought, what luck!) We would only have to get through a month with no proper outdoor space...

And now here we are 4 months later. I feel broken. We planned our living situation based on promises YOU made. I am signed into a year lease in an apartment we rented specifically because of it being near a dog park. How can you do this to people, how can you do this to their animals? Do you think because it's a pet I should just "get rid of him"?

I never understood why people distrusted politicians and government before ... now I do.

When our lease is up we may just look outside of Guelph. You have shown us how little dog owners matter in Guelph. If it was a child's playground, with noise and parking issues, you would have never closed it... but who cares if it just effects dogs and pet owners right?

It is also simple math. If you only have one dog park for an entire city, it will be over crowded with too much noise and too many cars. Guess what would have happened if you kept your promises to open the other 2 parks? You would have had 2/3 less traffic at the first park because now there are 3 to divide the load.

You made me lose faith in anything this municipality has promised. I've never felt like my local government cared less about me then I do now. Shame on you.

Ashamed to live in Guelph,
Caleigh Sprague

* * *

To whom it may concern,

I am saddened to hear about the closure of the dog park. I feel the majority of people using the facility have been responsible and respectful of the neighbourhood. I have used the dog regularly despite living a 2 min walk from an off leash area.

Often the off leash area works well for our family but we worry in winter during certain conditions of our dog going on the water and falling thru the ice.

The dog part has been a great way to socialize our younger dog and reinforce positive behaviour.

I feel many of the usage pressures of noise traffic and wear and tear on the current facility would have been lessened with moving forward with the additional proposed sites.

Thank you
Roxane Bernhard

* * *

Hello there,

As a citizen of Guelph for over 20 years I feel the need to weigh in on the proposed closing of the fenced in dog park at Peter Mizersky park. I think it's a great thing to have in Guelph and should have in Guelph but maybe it's just been put in the wrong place. I feel that Guelph should have it in such a place where barking dogs and increased traffic wouldn't bother nearby residents. It needs to be someplace a little more rural, a little more industrial maybe?? Please keep the park as is and look for a better place. I'm not sure where the other fenced in parks are proposed for but I think if they are close to residential that you will find the same problems. Thank you for your time.

Sandra Macdonald

* * *

Come on folks. Is Guelph going to be the only city in Ontario, in Canada, to lag behind on this? Councillors do your research and see what is out there. Don't listen to your constituents. Go visit a few off leash parks. London Kitchener Waterloo Vancouver Toronto look at the map. Yes the Peter Misersky Park was not well thought out, but because of one VERY LOUD voice, we are going to capsize and give up??

This is ridiculous to the point of embarrassing. Get going and build some dog parks. Keep our critters safe and happy and socializing.

I lived in Europe for many years (20) and loved taking my dogs, yes dogs, into restaurants where they were mostly greeted with a water bowl, a bone and a place under the table to rest. And this city cannot even provide a park or three???

This is a sham and a shame.

Feel free to contact me below and thanks for your attention- make this city sane and safe.

Barbara and the fur kids

Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive and go do it.

Because what the world needs is people who have come alive. H Thurman

Barbara Wilkinson

I believe the closure of the Peter Misersky dog park is a mistake. I was so proud of Guelph city council, deciding on a leash free park in the first place.

At first, it seemed to me, that Guelph was starting to take a more caring approach to the little things like other cities, such as Kitchener have done.

Forcing a closing of this park after a mere 5 months, and after spending \$100,000 building the park, is yet another bad, no wait "STUPID" decision made by this city.

If we are to relocate the park?, " WHICH I DON'T BELIEVE WILL HAPPEN "then at least leave the current location open, till a relocation site is available.

The cancellation of Lee and Bristol Parks, makes me not believe anything good will come from this.

This is not right. Although there have been some complaints, it should not cause such a closure without first finding a new location.

Anytime anything good happens here in Guelph, Naysayers and complainers wreck it for everyone else.

How is it that this city continues to constantly make the wrong decisions?

These people whose grievances, although exaggerated in numbers, as well as complaints, win yet again....

Well done winners..I for one am not surprised!

I have lost any respect for this city.

Do the right thing for once..

Shame on you city council...

Robert Nicol

To whom it may concern,

I've lived in Guelph since 2006. 2 years ago we adopted a rescue dog & about a year ago we adopted a second. Both dogs are well behaved & get along with other dogs, but having adopted both as adults (who were both street dogs) I'm not convinced either will return 100% of the time I call them if they were to see a squirrel or something at a non fenced of leash park.

I did try the off leash park on Lee Street with limited success when we got our first rescue. Not only did my dog sometimes ignore my calls, so did everyone else's. The dogs would run into the trees or people's back yards at the edge of the park. So I don't take them to those parks anymore.

Before we had a fenced park they had either the back yard or walks, but neither really provide the needed exercise. When the fenced park was put in last year it proved to be very good for them. Both dogs got a lot more exercise & our newest rescue who had been somewhat timid gained a lot of confidence there which translated to a happier & more relaxed dog at home.

I doubt any amount of years or training will 100% stop them from chasing squirrels, so for their safety I will never take them to an unfenced park.

As far where a park should be, that's a tough one. If it's too remote it's of little value to most. Taking the dog to the park shouldn't be "an excursion".

The very same complaints residents have of the current park could be said & used for basically anything new anywhere. At some point all those houses had a large green space & having added a row of townhouses would be considered displeasing to the previous residents while increasing traffic to the area & impacting available parking.

The same complaints could said for new schools as well. Increased traffic, increased noise, increased litter.

I assume the smell refers to the dog waste receptacle in front of the park which not only is a terrible design but also in what I would consider a lazy & inconsiderate location. It would need to be actually in (or at the edge of) the park for dog owners to want to use it properly as they don't want to leave their dogs unattended to leave the park to use the receptacle. Having it right by the parking lot is easy for a city worker to get to it but means everyone using the parking lot has to smell it.

Basically, when you buy into city living you essentially accept that your living environment will evolve as needed for the general population. You have to live on a large piece of land far away from the city to not be impacted by other people (as much).

As a life long dog owner I personally don't think there should be any unfenced off leash dog parks. I know that no amount of training can 100% overpower a dog's instinct.

Sooooo, simply add a fence to existing off leash parks.

Greg Roth

Hello there,

This email is in regard to the discussion of closure for the Misersky Dog Park. For all of the dog owners in Guelph that love this park, including myself, PLEASE keep this park open. We've read the articles, we never knew about the meeting this past Monday that was held (no one told ANY of the dog owners, how fitting), and there is bias in some articles that I've read. If you have a dog, bring it to the park and see for yourself. I have a young hyper lab pup, who loves other dogs. Since it has started getting dark earlier, I can say that 9/10 of the times I am the LAST one leaving that park no later than 6:30pm because it is dark. And I stay to play fetch with my dog when everyone is gone. He does not bark, not even at home! And the ODD time there is that one dog that comes and barks for maybe 2min till they get settled. Are you really going to take the dog park away for the 2min of barking of a nervous dog? Also the concern about the poop bags- I've maybe seen the green poop disposal overfilled once and if anything that is not a dogs owners problems that has happened, it must've missed a pickup. Honestly, just come and see the park itself in action. Come on a weekday evening around 4:30, come on a Saturday afternoon and see for yourself. A lot of dogs need, love, and can't wait till their owners get home to go to this park. When I turn on the street my dog knows where we are going, we're going to see his friends. Don't take the only fenced dog park away from all the dogs who are waiting by the door to go there. I could go on longer about how this park is needed, like how some dogs need to run and not just be walked on a leash for their health, how some dog breeds need to be fenced because they are deaf, blind, or simply love squirrels and will chase then when are seen, or how dogs can have anxiety and jsut need a couple minutes to realize the dogs are welcoming her to the park when they all run to her. THE 2mins OF BARKING IS NOT WORTH THE LOSS OF THIS PARK. Enough said. Just come see it for yourself, you can't vote for something that you haven't seen in action. And if you're a dog owner, bring your dog. Let the dogs decide.

Mariah Crevier

To whom it may concern,

Please keep the Peter Misersky park open for all our furry kids. Guelph does not have any other fenced in designated dog parks. My dog truly enjoys being able to run around with his friends and taking this away from him would break my heart.

Thank you,
Morgann Rollin

Dear Mr. Mayor and Council

This letter is written in disappointment that you would even consider taking away the fenced dog park that is already built and scrapping the other two.

I was so excited when you announced the fenced in dog parks. Finally somewhere for the dogs to run and play. Every City around us has them. But..... a few neighbours complain and you back down. Why is their voice more important than the thousands of people who have dogs and use the park.

You picked the location at Misersky Park, yes I do agree, not the best location.....but it's there now and it works. No matter what time of day, it is always packed with dogs. As for the noise complaint of barking.....that is nonsense, some days you may here the odd dog bark but most days nothing. As for the complaint of parking..... I have never been when I couldn't find a spot.....the residents shouldn't be in those spots anyways, they have driveways. Why is it my fault that they have more cars than their driveway holds.....why are they entitled to extra parking privileges? I'm sorry but this makes me very angry.

I live in the West end and drive 20 mins across town on a regular basis. It is worth it to see my dog's face light up and tail wagging as soon as we turn on to the street...he knows he gets to run and play and see his friends.

The City has put up so many new playgrounds in the past years..... are you going to tear them down if neighbors complain the kids are to loud. What about the skating rinks in winter.....better shut those down too if we are being fair.

Our City is by-lawed to death for every little thing....we can do nothing in this City.

Let us have a dog park.....in the least COMPROMISE. Let us keep the dog park that is already built, the money has been spent. How do you justify spending \$100,000 to build a park then just throw it away....that is insane. Those are my tax dollars you are throwing away. This council has no concept of financial responsibility....lets spend, just raise taxes...68 million for a library no one will use.... yeah lets do it.....do we have the money....NO....but who cares, do it anyways..... what's a 100 grand compared to that..... well to me that is a hell of alot of money. If the City has money to throw away, I will gladly accept a cheque.

Do the right thing.....show us that our voices matter...show us that dogs matter!!!

Kristy Holdaway

Hello,

My name is Jennifer St-Pierre, and I live with my family in Guelph. I wanted to provide my thoughts on the recent announcement that Guelph will close its only enclosed dog park, and plans to halt development of the two other fenced in dog areas. I have never had a dog, until October 2019. I would therefore not classify myself as a 'dog person', per se. However, my daughter has autism, and just

received an Autism Assistance Dog Guide from the Lions Foundation of Canada – 'Thea' joined our family on October 3rd, to support my daughter.

Thea is a wonderful, exceptionally well trained dog. As the beneficiary of such a dog guide, we have a suite of requirements we need to uphold for her care – for example, vet visits every 6 months, daily grooming and teeth brushing, nail trimming, exercising and socializing. When a dog guide (or any dog, for that matter) does not have the opportunity to socialize with other dogs, they increasingly get distracted when they DO randomly meet another dog in public. Therefore regular socialization is a critical component of her care – such that she can do her job.

The fenced dog park provided the perfect opportunity for her to be a 'dog' with other dogs, meeting this socialization requirement. You see, we are actually not allowed to have Thea off-leash unless it IS within a fully fenced enclosure. There are at least 8 dog guides in the Guelph area, just through the Lions foundation alone – likely more (probably you have this information, as we had to register her with the city and provided proof she was a dog guide).

So all I would like to say is – there are many people, for many reasons, who need to use a fenced in dog area. It is safer for the dogs (no risk of running off, or running up to a person not prepared or wanting to greet a dog) and the people. As I was historically not a dog person, I can also understand the residential concerns of a few, who did not want the dog park there. But there must be a better compromise which can be reached, other than fully abandoning plans for off-leash dog areas?

Happy to chat further,
Jennifer St-Pierre

Hi,

I'm contacting you regarding the potential closure of the new Peter Misersky fenced-in dog park (as well as the cancellation of the others that have been planned). I am not in favour of this decision, especially since the laws regarding letting dogs off leash in other areas of the city have changed. Until an appropriate alternative is available, I would be extremely disappointed if the park were closed.

This type of facility is something dog owners desperately need, and other places that I've lived have been far ahead of Guelph in terms of having these areas available. We pay fairly high property taxes in Guelph, relative to other cities, and to see that money wasted on planning and development only to have the park closed after less than a year is irritating.

If the location of the current park (and planned parks) is unsuitable, a new location needs to be found, planned and developed before closing this park. I would urge

you to do a better job of surveying the locations in the future, this type of waste of taxpayer funds is unacceptable.

Please ensure that my concerns are forwarded on to the appropriate individual(s).

Sarah Bonin

* * *

City of Guelph,

Thank you for building the fenced dog park for our community. Peter Misersky Park is a great year-round-use city owned facility in the heart of the Grange Hill E. Neighbourhood. The park supports users with an Ultimate frisbee field, tobogganing hill, children's play structure area, community garden, fenced dog park, an open non structured area and ice skating, when mother nature cooperates.

The fenced dog park has been open for 4 months, and that is a very small sample size to justify making a decision to close it. Given time it is likely that the novelty users will decrease and as the media attention decreases so will new spectators. 1,370+ responses were received by city staff via the online survey, phone survey and meetings. Only 28/160 stakeholders attended the local meeting to discuss the early days of the Peter Misersky fenced dog park. Many of the -ve comments, both spoken and written, during that meeting were no more than political bashing and were not specifically relevant to the day to day experiences at the dog park located at Peter Misersky Park.

I believe the 22 meter setback for the fence, on city property, from the Condominium property is significantly more than most single family residences have with back yards and barking dog issues.

I suggest the following opportunities for improvements can be successfully implemented:

- •Reduction of dog park users – One suggestion is for the installation of an entrance key swipe card/fob system administered by the Guelph Humane Society. Cards/fobs would be issued with proof of licensing in the city of Guelph and current vaccination & health check records, for a donation to the Guelph Humane Society. This would reduce the numbers of users from other centers as well as non-compliant Guelph dog owners.
 - Intro dog training/socialization sessions held at the Guelph Humane Society promoting benefits of professional obedience and barking training. Perhaps local qualified professionals would support this initiative.
 - I am confident responsible users will continue to share best practices when using the fenced dog park. I suggest 4 months is too short for self-supervision to be successful, especially during the initial learning

curve. There are still users who need to understand this facility may not be the best fit for their dog.

- Noise issues for the closest residents is a real concern, especially for those who are home during the day. There are 124 homes in the condo development in addition to residents who live along Mountford Dr., Hadati Rd., Leacock Ave and Auden Road. The comments and concerns identified during written and TV news reports, in my opinion, are repetitive, overstated, some resolved, and delivered for their sensation factor. A real estate agent has indicated to owners in the condo development that the dog park would not decrease property values and in fact could be a draw for purchasers.
- I suggest traffic congestion at the entrance will decrease as numbers of users, over time, will naturally drop off. A speed bump and yield sign will help manage drivers. There are 24 city owned parking spots with 2 that are designated handicapped, along the easement. None of the parking spots located along the easement are designated for local home owners. The condo provides adequate resident and visitor parking.
- Many responsible people currently using the park have voiced solutions for the tendency of owners and dogs to collect in a group near the entrance. This occurrence could also be improved with the placement of benches along the back fence which I believe would draw the people and dogs further away from the residential easement side of the park. Continued self-supervision by responsible users will educate people on the benefits of moving while inside the fenced area.

This past Sunday my dog Pepper and I enjoyed our time in the fenced dog park with several others from our community. Pepper is a City of Guelph licensed, vaccinated, obedience trained quiet 6 year old boxer. Her prey instinct still sometimes overrides my wishes when a squirrel makes an appearance. We still walk the neighborhood to maintain and reinforce her on leash manners. While we were at the park children were building snowmen near the newly updated play area and other neighbors were tobogganing on the hill near the Auden Road entrance. Unfortunately the ice skating rink has been a tough accomplishment this year.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts,

Sincerely,

Suzanne Symons

* * *

Hi,

If the idea is to close a dog park is because of a few complaints, then would it remain open if there were more complaints not to close it?

Dogs unfortunately can't be dogs if they are constantly walked on leash. This was the only way they can run and just enjoy the life they deserve. It was about time that this city finally put a leash free dog park but now are considering closing. All because of complaints, dogs don't complain, think of the dogs. These same people once they get their way will then move on to something else to complain about. It will never end. You can end it now by telling the complainers to move along.

Jenny Fraser

To whom it may concern,

Please consider keeping this park open, even if it means to relocate it to a different area.

Some people can not be as physically active as their dogs need, also it is a safe area to have dogs off the leash and helps to prevent it where it is not allowed.

Perhaps giving it another chance to dog owners so they consider this a privilege and respect it more.

Initially there may have been a bit more barking because of it's high use when it was new which seems to be the biggest complaint from neighbors.

Please consider keeping it open.

Thank you
Laurie Grist

Thank you,

That week is one that I am unable to work remotely in Guelph so below is a statement I would like read:

I have been a long time resident on the Auden Rd area of Guelph. Currently I split my time between Guelph and Toronto to take care of both work and aging parents. For the last 15 years we have all walked our dogs off leash at the Guelph Jail which has functioned as a unofficial dog park for years. There is a lovely community of dog walkers there and we know everyones name and their dogs name. For my parents, the area is seen as 'safe' for them to walk inside the city. In Toronto, I get a similar experience with the six fenced in dog parks all within walking distance from my house. No matter where you live in Toronto, it is basically guaranteed that you are within a short walk or drive to one. The communities that form around these spaces are beautiful and many folks use it as their social space, especially aging dog owners.

Over that last 5 years the prison has slowly become less and less accessible. Parking shutting down, access bridges being taken down, etc. It has brought up a discussion with my parents of where they are able to have safe outdoor activities. When the dog park opened close enough to walk to on city paths, we were really excited. For them, it is a way to continue to be active while interacting with their dog in a legal space. I tell them the 'tails' of respectful walking fenced in dog areas that so many other cities have figured out - near my second place in Mimico we have fenced in hiking spaces like High Park and Etobicoke Creek, but we also have various smaller sizes of dog parks like Humber Bay.

Ultimately these spaces are not just for dogs but smart city planning for community and an aging population. I have "walked my parents" as they walk their dog every morning I can. They have bonded with all types of Guelph citizens, shared their stories and successes with their neighbours, and helped people grieve as they lost furred family members. Guelph is not just a bedroom city for Toronto that people are passing through, it is a living space where people want to retire and continue to be active outside their houses. Animals and dogs have been proven to be incredibly impactful for physical and mental health and wellbeing. Guelph is behind in how they plan for our aging population and create smart neighbourhood design but I hope that the solution is not to give up on trying to create access to safe legal spaces for folks and their furred companions.

I want to close up with a story (my family is Algonquin and it is our way). This morning I was at a park on the east side of Toronto prior to work. I ran into a group that only knows each other through the park. One older woman gets picked up and driven with her doggo every morning by someone who used to be a stranger. They are the normal '7:30am' crowd and I am just a guest. They asked me to help sing a birthday song for a young woman who was turning 16. None of them were related to her, but they have watched her grow up. Her house is near enough to walk to the park alone. After about 30 minutes this group drifted out as the waves of community turned over. Everyone knows each others dogs names and were so excited to meet my Luci. This isn't unique here, it is every park across the city I go to. It is the only place I get this sort of interaction and a primary reason I chose to get a dog. Guelph is new to this sort of community building, but it is a path I highly encourage they continue on. My hope is to someday be able to live full time in Guelph again, and I want it to be a place my whole family can feel welcomed and connected to.

Laura McPhie

* * *

Please add my voice to those resisting the closure of the existing fenced in dog park, and termination of plans to build a second.

Amenities like dog parks need to be neighbourhood-based and walkable. Moving them to the outskirts of town, or closing them entirely, is poor planning.

Once the city has multiple dog parks, usage will be spread amongst them and the demand currently seen at Misersky will lessen notably.

All urban dwellers need to cope with the inconveniences of living near others in a dense, active environment. Different issues impact various residential sites: traffic, schoolyard noise, construction, sports fields, special events, parking, snow clearance, etc.. No residences should be able to claim a right to freedom from a normal urban occurrence stemming from the actions of typical lifestyles.

Thanks for considering all views.
Susan Carey

* * *

I am writing to the city of Guelph to express my strong support for the continual (preferably increased) presence of fenced-in dog parks in our city.

I am a 9-year resident of this city, first as an undergraduate student studying animal biology, and currently as a veterinary student at the Ontario Veterinary College. I am heavily involved in the animal care and rescue world, not only through my education but also through my experience with canine rescues, humane societies, farm sanctuaries, and welfare focus studies.

Not everyone loves dog parks, but they are a necessity and a provision that belongs as much as arenas, pools, etc. Parks are crucial for canine socialization, resident health (physical and mental), sense of community, and overall wellness.

The city should be ashamed of its total waste of "consultations" prior to the opening of Peter Misersky park, considering the rapid turnaround of an apparent closure announcement. \$100 is a lot of money in relativity, and the reversal of its spending after a mere few months is unacceptable.

I believe the city will find itself inundated with dog owners expressing their support for dog parks, as well as outrage towards the gross mishandling of this whole issue. If resident objections were an issue at this location, it should have been addressed long before installation.

Whatever the next steps in this process, the city must not be left without a fenced in dog park.

Carleigh Cathcart

* * *

I firmly believe that parks in the City are for people-and people walking their dogs. I do not agree with the City spending taxpayer dollars to establish leash free dog parks- people who wish their dogs to be leash free should go outside the City to

areas such as Guelph Lake. This way all people can visit all parks with families without worry of dog attacks and knowing that their park tax dollars are well spent. Our family has had dogs for over 40 years and have never had need of a "leash free" park.

Anne Holman

We need to get this proposal going ! No dog park in an established .Neighbourhood.

Ans Bader

I am a dog owner and was thrilled to have a safe place to take my dog where he could socialize and run with other dogs. I was looking forward to Bristol street opening as it is closer to where I live.

While I understand the frustration of the near by homes, I don't think a complete closure is the answer. A lot of money was spent on this, so why not find a compromise?

Maybe move the fenced area closer to the middle of the park? Maybe plant some trees to cut down on noise. Definitely have it closed by 6pm nightly. Maybe have people pay for keys to control who uses it, and to make sure their animals have had all vaccinations. I have heard this works in other municipalities.

Susan Bowman

Good afternoon,

I wanted to reach out regarding the upcoming vote at the end of this month, to make sure my voice is heard.

Specifically regarding the Peter misersky park, I think we can all agree it's close to the houses and truthfully, I wouldn't love it either. I think it could have at least been placed elsewhere in the same vicinity. But ultimately, the city did research, decided to put it there, and it wasnt a secret. There was media coverage before ground was broken, and the detailed plans on the city website well in advance of the site being built.

Also, its already been paid for, and will cost even more tax dollars to remove. Considering that guelph has some of the highest municipal tax rates per household in the country, that's really not a responsible or reasonable use of those tax dollars.

Also, the staff report to counsel (that was based on the results of online and telephone surveys, drop in discussion dates and research prior to construction, as

well as the subsequent Q&A sessions held specifically to hear and address resident concerns) actually recommended to instead move the entrance back several feet and plant some trees and bushes for visual and noise buffers, as well as bump the Bristol location back further than the planned location and i believe also plant blocker trees, and cancel the Lee street location. I feel this is a fair compromise, so I'm really not sure how city council moved from unanimously voting in favour of the parks and their original locations in summer of 2019 to now a complete scrapping of the entire project.. resulting in a sizable financial hit to city taxpayers (and honestly kind of a slap in the face to those who faithfully pay their annual pet license fees) who must now again travel outside of the city to use alternate facilities.

All because of a very vocal minority launching a series of complaints (many of which are categorically false, and many of which come from one individual who has been harassing lawful users of public space for it's intended purpose, manipulating users by lying about by laws and park rules, threatening to call police for the lawful use of the space, impersonating city officials by placing pylons in public parking in an attempt to discourage park usage, but that is neither here nor there) from people regarding the use of land ... that doesnt belong to them. Perhaps the condo corp should not have built homes butting up directly to public space. Or perhaps the owners should try to remember that generally, you need to purchase land if you want to control the space.

Unfortunately I think it doesnt mstter where the city puts the parks, some people are going to be selfish and feel entitled to space that isnt theirs. I think its best to employ some sort if reasonable compromise that wouldn't break the budget or set a precedent that neighbouring homeowners have the ultimate say on what happens to adjacent land, while meeting a long standing demand of the overall community, even if it was met many years after neighbouring cities found the time and space for theirs. Perhaps if guelph hadn't been so resistant back then when there was a lot more land available, it wouldn't be in this position now.

As a guelph resident, tax payer, home owner and dog owner, I implore the Guelph city council to revisit this issue. Please consider the overall need to the overall community, rather than capitulate to an aggressive vocal minority.

Thank you,
Rachael deVries

I am an 81 years old woman my legs are a bit unsteady. Like a lot of other senior citizen I like to walk on Bristol but if they put a dog park here we will not be able to get any exercise with the amount of cars coming and going as our part of the road has no side walk. Please rethink the dog park

Mary OKane

* * *

Hello,

I'm writing to express my support in keeping the dog park open at Peter Misersky Park. Not only does my dog love the park but it really brings the community of dog owners together.

It is a real asset to the neighbourhood and it would be a terrible waste of resources to close down this park.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Andrea Bevilacqua

* * *

To whom it may concern,

While I may not be someone who uses the Peter Misersky park daily, I needed to voice my absolute displeasure over hearing the councillors decision to close the park at the end of the month.

I frequent this park with my family and friends and love to bring my dog there. I was overjoyed when I heard about the park opening FOUR MONTHS AGO.. sadly I've only been able to use it a few times before I found out the city let some bully tell them to close it down. The few times that I have been there; it's been quiet, one or two other dogs - stoop and scoop!

Since when has our city ever stood for this? It's disheartening as a young person to see an entire council get pushed into making such a fiscally irresponsible decision as this one. Where is the Justice in that? The democracy?

Well, the city invested their (citizens) money and their (citizens) hearts into this park - we trusted and believed that the city and its councillors would find a way to make this work.

I still trust that the city will make this right, without needing to close the park.

Those of us who don't feel comfortable at Hanlon Creek or an unfenced sports field deserve the opportunity to work on training our dogs in a setting as perfect as the Peter Misersky Park. Its a great location and accessible for my whole family - including Grandma, and my nephews. This is also, bearing in mind that the coyote problem is only getting worse and we need safe places to play with our dogs, apparently. Moving the parks farther into the country only puts the dogs further at risk, and adds a layer of inaccessibility that I'm sure you'll hear about. One of the best parts of Peter Misersky park is that I can walk there with my dog - not drive.

Imagine building ANOTHER set of dog parks only for nobody to use them? Lord, fix one problem before starting another!

Please no more empty promises of "the future"... we've waited long enough.

Do The Dogs Proud!
Maddie Shipsides

Really leave it open. How many complainers are there 2 or 3? This is a knee jerk reaction to too few people seeing too many dogs and people enjoying our park. Wow where does it stop too many kids playing?

Todd Pyke

Please don't close the dog park! This has been a special place for my family. We have recently had a death in the family and have found the dog park to be a place of community and healing. As I'm sure you know, dogs are so therapeutic and it has been part of our healing process to sit at the dark park and be around all the happy dogs and chat with others over our love for our animals. Our pup is super friendly and loves to socialize with other dogs and people. He is a runner, so if ever gets off leash he will run away to greet every person and animal he can find. The dark park has offered him the freedom to run and meet everyone off leash and learn to come back to me. Without the dog park his urge to follow a scent and curiosity results in him dashing out the front door and a crazy chase ensues across the city. Since the dog park, I can allow him to go free and get that pent up energy out. Since the dog park, he has not run away. We live our lives siloed from each other, and the dog park was a refreshing way to connect with other people. Especially during our grief. I think it is a huge mistake to close the park. It is my favourite spot to go on my day off, and as a social worker at a busy hospital, I find it has become a part of my self care. I understand the complaints from the residents that live nearby the Peter Misersky dog park, but I beg you to leave the dog park open, at least until a new one is built. Please don't leave us dog owners high and dry.

Thank you!
Laurie Trace

Good morning,

I am absolutely devastated at the news that the fenced-in dog parks in Guelph might be closed down. This is heartbreaking.

Pets help people and cities thrive.
Pets give unconditional love, companionship and purpose.

Pets get people outside for exercise and social contact.
Pet owners have less depression, anxiety and loneliness.
Countless other places in the world are making their cities a better place for pets.
Why is Guelph failing in this regard? Why are pet owners' voices not being heard?

Please do not shut down the fenced-in dog park until something else is completely built elsewhere. We have been waiting for these amenities for years, and now you're taking them away from us?

I ask you to please reconsider your decision. Please take the time to look at this website to help encourage you to make Guelph a better city for our pets, and in turn for our citizens:

<https://www.bettercitiesforpets.com>

Pets do much more for people than you realize. Pets should be one of the top priorities of the city. Make the right choice for us.

Thank you for your time,
Caroline Fontaine

Dear Lordmayor and councillors,

My name is Joseph o' Kane I'm 83 years old I worked at the Guelph correctional centre for 26years, I bought this Condo at Bristol st because it had a nice small park on front of our Condo, I've been living there for 10 years now, I watched the Kids play soccer from my balcony, all summer, and you took that away, without giving us any notice, Please don't put a doggie park in Bristol st it will effect our seniors who walk up and down this narrow road some with walkers, also the car park is facing our two Condos, This will be noisy with dogs barking and doors slamming, This is a Senior living area and we don't need this at our ages,

Thank you,
Joe o' Kane

Hello

I am writing to express my concerns related to the closing of an already established dog park at Peter Misersky Park in Guelph. I take my dog to this park on a regular basis-it creates a safe place for my dog and dog owners to gather and socialize their dogs. This is city owned property whether it's for dogs or children there is always the possibility of noise-the home owners knew this when they purchased the property. I pay property taxes that are increasingly steadily.....why not use Franchetto Park as a dog park and move the sports field? This way insuring an east

end dog park. I wanted to share my concerns and ideas. Thank you from a concerned east end dog loving and owning resident.

Stephanie Varcoe

Good morning,

As a resident of the Junction area of Guelph, and owner of two dogs, I was beyond excited to hear that an off-leash park was planned for Bristol Park. Now those plans are in jeopardy, due to the I believe mostly unfounded concerns by a few people in regard to the Misersky Park. I certainly hope council will not throw the baby out with the bath water and cancel all plans for future dog parks as a result.

As a resident of Waterloo Avenue for the past 12 years, I have watched the neighbourhood go from crackhouses and numerous incidents including violence and petty thefts to a community that has really begun to thrive. An off-leash area at Bristol Park is a natural extension of the changes to the neighbourhood. The deserted park would now be a hub for dog lovers and neighbours and a positive step for our neighbourhood. Living here has not always been easy. Now with Fixed Gear open up the street, the new shared space at Edinburgh and Crimea, and the proposed dog park, people are getting out into the neighbourhood and we are seeing positive change and growth. Let's keep this going!

I wish to register to have my concerns heard at the planned council meeting on February 24th.

Thank you,
Kelly Hughes

Dear Mr. Guthrie

I am writing to voice my displeasure at the announcement to close the Peter Misersky dog park. As the one fenced dog park in the city of Guelph, it really is the only safe space to allow dogs to socialize in a controlled, off-leash environment. Socialization has been beneficial to my 10-month-old Labradoodle Honey. The park has allowed us to practice many of the skills taught in puppy class, most importantly learning to come with distractions. This, in turn, has led to an increase in her safety level as I know that she is able to come on command in any given situation. Honey's confidence level has increased since coming to the park regularly as she is able to interact with a variety of dogs and their owners. Once a timid dog, she now happily seeks out other dogs to play with. For the most part, I have found owners to be responsible for their pets and respectful of the park and its' neighbours.

I would ask that you reconsider your decision to close down this valuable asset in our community. The dogs of Guelph deserve to grow, play and prosper in the royal city.

Sincere Regards,

Nicole DeBeyer

To whom it may concern,

I am emailing you today to plead that Peter Misersky Dog Park should not be closed.

While I understand the distress this dog park may have on the few local residents, the city should also acknowledge the effect this will have on the hundreds of locals who use that dog park everyday, myself being one of them.

Having that park in place has done wonders for myself and my dog. He is finally able to run free in a city where he has never been able to before. Due to the extreme costs of single family homes with fenced backyards, all my poor dog has access to is a 10x10 partially fenced townhouse yard, and without the dog park, that is what he will be left with, Yes there are other 'off leash' dog parks in Guelph, but NONE of these are safe due to their close proximity to major roadways and the fact that they are not fenced. There are many other solutions that can be made instead of this, but the city seems to be deciding to take the easy way out and caving instead of coming up with a productive plan that benefits all, for example; 1. Keep the park open until construction on a new one has finished (perhaps fence in one of Guelph's already leash free dog parks) 2. Until this time, post signs indicating that the dog park may not be used from 8pm-8am and allow it to be reported to by law.

**Little advice, the next dog park to be made, should really consider turf, as the climate and the amount of rain Guelph receives will destroy the park as it did this Fall.

Thank you,
Kayley Teal

It has been my pleasure and my little dogs to visit and use and enjoy the company of the other dogs and their owners. The socializing aspect is very important and also the exercise that my dog gets is huge. Both contributing to her good health and happiness. I'm writing to ask the council to re-consider closing this off leash dog park until a suitable replacement can be found and installed. I was there on Saturday afternoon when quite a few dogs of all sizes were there frolicking about

and playing and running and chasing each other with lots of delight and on the hill beside the dog park young children were playing on their toboggans screaming and laughing and having fun. A really pleasant way to spend a while.

I ask sincerely for council to vote to keep the park until a suitable replacement is found and built.

Regards,
Pauline Wilcox

* * *

To Whom it may concern,

I've been informed that the Misersky's dog park along with a few others are under consideration for closing. As someone with a large dog that needs room to run and the inability to provide him with a fenced backyard, I rely on dog parks for him to get proper exercise. We have very few fenced dog parks in Guelph and it would be unfortunate if they were to close down. On behalf of myself and my dog, along with many others, please do not close down these parks. I hope that you reconsider your views.

Thank you for your time,
Lisa Barrie

* * *

If you guys decide to close it I think it be a great idea to open one that's not near residential. I'm all in for the dog park and I do get that it's too close to houses. Please have a dog park. I don't care where but so have one. Thanks

Van

* * *

Good afternoon,

I'm reaching out to make a suggestion on the Mistersky dog park issue.

I do not use the park very often but have been there a few times. I have never experienced anything negative while at the park and have observed that users were very friendly and conscientious about picking up after their dogs. However, by this fall, the play area for large dogs had become quite torn up and muddy. I think that this is a testament to how badly the city needs fenced in areas for dogs to run.

As for the location of the park, it's in a built up area but it's very accessible and lends itself well to accommodating dog owners with special needs. Given the increasing trend in therapy dog demand, I would expect that more accessible dog

parks will be needed. The reality of this is that these parks will be needed in other built up areas.

I have heard many complaints about parking. Perhaps one solution for the Mistersky park would be to add or move parking and add another set of gates?

While I do sympathize with people who don't support or want the park in their neighbourhood, I think that there is a need for accommodation and inclusivity. To date, Mistersky is the only fenced in public park in Guelph that will do this.

In terms of future parks, I suggest that council reevaluate those plans to incorporate lessons learned from the Mistersky issue and to take into consideration the needs of current dog owners and potential future owners.

Many thanks,
Robin Smart

* * *

Please do not close the dog park as we really enjoy it for our dog who likes to run!

At least find an alternative!

Stephen Trace

* * *

I am writing regarding the misguided decision made at the February 3 Committee of the Whole Meeting. In the revised agenda, there was the following planned topic:

*8.2 PS-2020-02 Leash Free Implementation Plan 140

With the recommendation: That the Leash Free implementation plan as approved by Council on June 24, 2019 be amended to remove the proposed fenced leash free facility at Lee Street Park.

I am unsure how a simple recommendation to remove a planned but non built fenced dog park can result in the removal of an approved plan and existing fenced in dog park. This decision is exaggerated by a minority of not in my backyard (NIMBY) homeowners that have manipulated media and responses to get the Peter Mistersky Park shut down. This is a disgrace and the fact that hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars are proposed to be wasted is unacceptable.

As an owner of two dogs, we have visited this park and used it to help with the socialization of our puppy when it first opened. I acknowledge that there has been a learning curve with some dog owners and time of use based on conversations with the other park users. But this park is a positive feature and it is fantastic seeing a public space used by Guelph citizens regularly, This is a success story.

I was approached by some of the angry nearby residents that were unhappy with the park and verbally abused on numerous occasions. These are the individuals playing victim to the media and this council. There has been no change to property values, and if the same situation was occurring with screaming happy children in the adjacent playground, I doubt their concerns would be heard. The City did it's due diligence with posting notices and consultation, it was not until after the fences installed and the park used that these citizens "noticed" the dog park. I find this very hard to believe.

Please do not remove the leashed in park at Peter Misersky, or the other planned ones. They will be used more than the existing playgrounds in the City and on a more frequent basis. I want my taxpayer money to go towards features being used, like this park is. I want to continue to use this park for years to come.

On a side note, please remove phone surveys as a form of public communication and consultation. The home phone is no longer a common feature in residences and is not representative of Guelph citizens when used. I know the Guelph Public Consultation team is aware of this, and should use other means to communicate with citizens.

Thank you

Brian Holden

* * *

Dear City of Guelph Clerks

I have been using the Peter Misersky Dog Park for the past three months and favour the continued provision of this dog park. I take my dog about five times a week. I have seen countless dog owners and their dogs enjoying the use of the park. Each owner supervises his or her dog, but usually the dogs play freely and most get a good run.

Twice I entered the dog park around the noon hour and my dog and I were the only ones in the park. Soon others came to join us, so I told them "Welcome to my dog park" as I take pride in its existence, and it benefits both owners and dogs alike.

I understand that some dog owners have not been courteous or followed the rules for hours of the dog park. I am surprised at these reports, and that apparently nothing has been done to correct infractions and ensure that they do not happen again. Yet, I usually go in late afternoon and have not seen anyone abusing the park.

I suppose that there must have been hundreds of dog owners using the Peter Misersky Dog Park. Closing it will definitely be a public relations blunder. It's good that this facility was offered, but closing it will leave a black mark against our fair city. I was born in Guelph and am now a senior citizen. I recall the friendliness of

the earlier days of Guelph. I hope that this feeling and treatment of people will continue in this instance.

As the Peter Misersky Dog Park was not investigated fully enough, I guess, we should not compound this with another error. At the very least, we need to keep the dog park open, and try to correct any ongoing problems, and then close it once a new site is open. Leaving dog owners hanging and waiting for another location to open is not a helpful option.

I often get people asking me if I was a candidate in this past federal election, and yes I was. It seems that I was in a tie for the most number of election signs put up. I represent the interests of many other people. Thanks so much for your help.

Yours truly
Gordon Truscott

* * *

Good morning Ms. Clack:
Please add this item to the next meeting agenda, which I believe is on February 24th. Let me know if you have any questions.

I've been advocating for a fenced dog park in Guelph for about 5+ years. I had been regularly in touch with the city, through my councillors (Ward 1), as well as Heather Flaherty more recently, and Stephan Ilic. Because of my extensive experience using dog parks across the country, I offered to volunteer &/or fundraise for the planning and development of this initiative in Guelph. Every time I contacted anyone listed above, I was assured that staff had this project well in hand.

When I saw the survey, I was immediately concerned about the quality of the questionnaire. The questions did not address any of the issues I had been led to believe were being considered - particularly, a fenced dog park. I was told to add comments at the end, which I did - extensively. I also included links to dog park planning resources easily found on the internet. The main points that I added were as follows:

1. The City of Guelph needs large, fully-fenced dog parks with double-gated entrances. For comparators, I recommend using the dog parks in Bechtel Park & Kiwanis Park in Waterloo. Both of these parks provide enough acreage to ensure dogs have space to run, play, and move away from other dogs if desired. They also provide trees for shade in the hot summer months, as well as a varied topography that dogs find interesting.
2. These parks should have trails to keep dogs & owners moving to prevent dogs becoming territorial. Large signs to encourage "Keep Moving" and a board outside to educate users why this is so important. Because movement of users is essential, no picnic tables or benches should be inside the fenced area.
3. These are the rules I recommend:
 - o don't bring treats or toys (they can encourage aggression)
 - o don't bring puppies (under four months), aggressive dogs, or dogs in heat

- o dogs older than seven months must be spayed or neutered
- o kids under the age of 12 must come with an adult
- o pick up dog waste and dispose in the designated receptacle
- o dogs must have proper licenses and vaccinations
- o stay in close control of your dog at all times

Months later, when I saw the draft policy that was posted on-line, I voiced my concerns again with the following message:

This policy is a good start but my years of experience with these facilities make me concerned with the following:

- the comparators used in your review were small, for example, KW has 2 large fenced parks but the City of Guelph used the much smaller McLennan park; the proposed 3 facilities are quite small with no trails to encourage movement of owners to prevent territorial behaviour in their dogs, - the proposed rules cover many items that will help reduce potential conflict between dogs but you missed a couple of important issues; you exclude rawhide & food, which is great, but these parks should also exclude all toys, including balls because they often create conflict between dogs & some dogs eat them which creates a whole different problem for dog owners; dogs can get exercise without toys if the owners move through a trail system in a park,
- lastly, intact dog's shouldn't be allowed; while not inherently aggressive, they release scents that threaten other dogs, often resulting in altercations. I was surprised you missed this.

From my understanding, none of the above recommendations were considered. I really don't understand how decisions about location & rules were made but it appears to me that the problem started with a poor consultant resulting in an inferior product. It's easy to get opinions from people but I don't see anywhere in the process where dog park best practices were considered. If they were, they were ignored. One thing that Heather Flaherty said to me more than once, that I found condescending, is that "there's more to it than putting up a fence"; however, it appears to me that that is exactly what happened at Misersky.

I'm terribly disappointed with the decision to close the only fenced park in Guelph & the cancellation of the others planned, especially Bristol. Staff & councillors have admitted making mistakes in this process. I am asking that the only park remain open until other suitable locations are created. I've been to this park several times in the past 5 weeks and have not experienced the problems that have created the complaints: noise, no parking, garbage, people not following by-laws. I'm often the only user and it's quiet. I encourage all decision-makers to join me mornings around 8am. I believe complaints have been blown out of proportion and that the initial "novelty" of the dog park has subsided. The Bristol location would further decrease use at Misersky.

Please reconsider your decision to close this park. Dog owners have waited long enough.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Joy Walker

Hello

I am extremely disappointed in your vote to cancel the planned fenced dog parks. I am a frequent visitor at the Lee street dog park along with many others in the neighbourhood. I am going to keep this short and just point out why:

1. You have mentioned that your focus is traffic calming in the city. We also need people to drive less to ease traffic. How do you expect to achieve that when you propose to make people drive to a dog park outside the residential areas. Currently most people walk to these dog parks.

2. Lee street park is already a very successful leash free park. We did established previously that there is a need for fenced dog parks in Guelph and that is the reason we have been having these discussions over past few months. Fenced Dog parks would have just made it better for residents around, as dogs would not enter their backyards and dog are kept contained.

3. We as a city have to change the NIMBY mindset and build a more inclusive community. Where people can walk to places, weather it is kids park (also noisy), a dog park or a grocery store in the east end.

Would you be opposed to a grocery store in east end because the some residents around think it would increase traffic noise and parking issues? Are we going to start moving schools out of the city because they bring noise and traffic?

I hope you reconsider your decision. Fenced parks near residential areas are a need, not a want.

Thanks
Ujjwal Verma

I love dogs very much but I do not have a dog because I do not want to put up with the smell clean up after them (esp in the winter when you cant find the droppings until the snow melts) nor do I like listening to their barking ... esp smaller dogs

I used to take my kids to the park there and go for picnics when my kids were small .. there also use to be a small playground there 20 yrs ago ... not sure if it is still there it was a lovely park. I could never take small kids there now ...

I also would NEVER buy a home in that area because I would not want the problems like smell, barking (after working a night shift) or parking getting into my drive because most of the houses in that area are on smaller lots and with people driving to get there ..

I believe the ones who should have the greatest say are the people who live in the immediate area as they are the ones most affected by it ... not the ones who worry whether or not they can take their dog there ...

I personally think that parks should be planned in advance so that people can decide if they wish to have a dog park in their backyard or have a child park in their backyard IN ADVANCE of moving to a neighborhood...

there are many other areas of Guelph where a LOT fewer neighbors and tax paying citizens would be affected what about just outside of Guelph ... or an industrial areaput a fence around a the space.... where there are few neighbors ... and build a lot for people to park there ...
it should be a small amount pay per use.... like the bus system where riders contribute toward the ride ... but not the full cost why should all taxpayers pay for a park that only the dog owners would use . maybe like a toonie to enter the park... it could also pay for someone to clean up after lazy owners who cant find their dog poop way across the field when their beloved goes ...

it really isn't fair to the taxpayers surrounding the park to have an equal vote with those who like myself who are largely unaffected by their very real problems ... this benefits most dog owners ... and not necessarily all property owners

thanks to all council for consideration

Alana Mac

Hello,

I am a fairly new user of the off leash enclosure at Peter Misersky Park. I am thrilled to have a place where my dog can run with similar sized dogs. I have some knee problems, so I can't walk him very far and so this park has given us a wonderful opportunity for my dog to get some exercise.

Unfortunately, I have heard there has been one complaint and now money spent on building this space is now being considered for removal. Why is it such an issue to have the park here? Everyone who uses it appreciates the space, and it would be fiscally irresponsible to spend tax payers money on park improvements, only to have it torn out within months of completion. Please let me know what steps users can take to let us keep our park.

Kind regards,

Jeanne Castellanos

* * *

Dear City Clerk,

You may be already experiencing dog park fatigue but I thought I should still let you know that yet another of your citizens is affected by the sudden decision to close the park.

Our new dog, Maita, came from Iran and like many rescued dogs needs a fenced area to socialize safely. Well-socialized dogs behave better and are easier to train. Puppies all need a fenced area until they are trained.

The anti-dog park campaign has been led by a man I have up until now considered a friend. The consensus is that he resents the fact that there isn't a free parking spot in front of his house whenever he wants. People report having seen him use orange cones to prevent park users from parking in that spot - a spot that is not legally his but there for park users - he has an assigned parking spot as a home owner behind his house.

This is therefore a personal vendetta that has little to do with dogs - but he has used his persistent personality to amp up his neighbours against the park.

The city opened this dog park without consulting the neighbourhood or dog owners and perhaps its choice of location was not the best - but that is not the dog owner's or the dog's fault - why are we being punished? And why cancel the other slated parks? to cover the losses on the park already built? Did it really cost \$100,000.00? That seems excessive - but as my taxes paid for it as well as John Farley's this should not be a one-sided decision.

The meeting where you voted to close the park was ill-attended by dog owners because we had heard that the matter had been settled with a plan to move the fence and plant trees.

Finally, I live in Exhibition Park area and can hear Royals games being announced all summer, as well as other events in the park. I have strangers park on my street all the time. I have kids playing outside my door. I do not complain because that is what living in a city means. If you close the dog park is it going to mean that a large area of a public park paid for by public money sits unused or will it be removed so that kids can play soccer there and oh yeah - people can walk their dogs there.

In other words - nothing will change - Farley still won't have his personal parking spot and people and dogs will still use the park. Or a \$100,000.00 field will sit unused and that will become the issue.

People get crazy on both sides of any issue related to dogs - but this isn't about dogs - this is about people who think they have rights that they do not have - they

live in a city - there will be noise and inconveniences related to that. I can't always park on my street either, but I neither think I have the right to do so, nor that people who park on my street so they can walk their dogs in Ex Park should not be allowed to do so.

Thanks,
Janet Williams

Good morning,

I would like to express my concerns about the talk of closing the dog park and tell you why I think it should be kept.

I am not sure of everyone's concerns, but I have heard that there are concerns of noise. I have also heard concerns of some residents nearby that were not aware that the park would be in a residential area or so close to houses. In regards to that I think that there is always potential for noise in a park. When living in a city such things are to be expected.

In regards to the dog park being placed in Peter Misersky Park, I think it's a great location because it is accessible to many different community members. I think it's a great thing to have a fenced area for dogs to play safely. In my experience the dog park has been used responsibly. I have met dog owners who care deeply about dogs and their well being. Owners are close by watching their dogs behaviour and managing them when needed.

This dog park has become a positive community of dog lovers who are also very respectful to the people of the park.

I also think that the plans for the other two enclosures in Lee Street Park and Bristol Park should proceed. I think this will make these types of parks more accessible for everyone in the city and alleviate possible crowding of Peter Misersky, therefore resulting in happier community members across the board.

I really hope our voices will be heard and that this wonderful place that we visit every day will remain for the community members to enjoy.

Thank you for your time,
Kaitlin Kirkup

Hello,

I would like to voice my opinion that the dog park is a positive thing in the community. These parks create safe places for people to bring their dog to play, it is a public place where vulnerable people feel safer being out alone with their dog as it is a public area and less likely to be assaulted, harassed, followed etc instead of on a street. As a single female in Guelph, it is an area that I do not feel

uncomfortable going alone with my dog while walking on city streets feels much more uncomfortable and gives rise to some anxieties.

There needs to be an area for dogs to socialize with one another to create safe dog-to-dog interactions. If they are not allowed to have an area fenced off, many dogs who cannot handle the fence free parks without causing harm to themselves (or nearby properties) or getting lost absolutely need the fenced dog park to be socialized to ensure safety of public and other dogs when encounters occur. Everyone considers their dogs as part of their family, a children's play place wouldn't be closed if nearby residents complained about screaming kids, so it is unfair that the dog park is receiving the same critique.

Lastly, dogs also need socialization for the means of health. Dogs are subject to anxieties and depression, many of which stem from loneliness and/or isolation from other dogs. These parks allow owners to socialize their dogs for healthier animals mentally and less reactive dogs overall.

Thanks,
Brandi Grose

* * *

Hello,

My name is Brandy Nomad. I reside at XX Mountford Drive, Unit XXX, directly across from the off leash dog park.

Unfortunately I do not have my own puppy yet, but I will say that the parking spots in front are for the park, our complex tenants each have their own designated parking spot in the back. I have also never seen 50 to 100 dogs and really do not notice barking?

I reside with my mom and younger brother and although they're a bit nervous around dogs, these past 5 months they've begun to sit out on our porch and watch the dogs interact. I understand if the location is not ideal, but please if its possible, to keep it open until the new park has been completed?

It wouldn't seem like such a waste of the taxpayers money if we could at least continue to use it until the next one is ready.

Unfortunately I know the gentleman who is posted in the article, as he lives X houses down from us, and he seems to have an issue with ANY change. Even when the walking path track was put in, he has tried to make a fuss.

Anyway, this is just my two cents,

Best regards,
Brandy Nomad

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