

**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
INTERDEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM
PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Malcolm Matthews, Director, Parks and Recreation Department

THROUGH: Terry M. Brechtel, City Manager

COPIES: Melissa B. Vossmer; Finance; Management and Budget; Legal; File

SUBJECT: Ordinance Amending the City Code Related to Pet Leash Requirements in Certain City Parks

DATE: September 25, 2003

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This ordinance amends the City Code by adding to the list of parks in which all pets are required to be restrained on a leash, to include Alamo Plaza in District 1, Eisenhower Park in District 8, La Villita in District 1, Market Square in District 1, Medina River Park in District 4, Pearsall Park excluding dog park area in District 4, River Walk in District 1 and Woodlawn Lake Park in District 7; restricting all pets from Friedrich Park in District 8 and Crownridge Canyon Nature Area in District 8; and requiring pets to be restrained by a leash during community events open to the public that are held in City parks.

Staff recommends approval of this ordinance.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Through a six-signature memo dated May 21, 2003, City Councilman Julian Castro requested that City staff review the current San Antonio leash law. The Health Department prepared a report that was presented to the Council Governance Committee on July 2, 2003. As part of the discussion at that meeting, Councilman Castro relayed to staff that constituents in the Woodlawn Lake Park area desired that dogs be kept on a leash. This issue was subsequently discussed at the Economic and Human Development Committee meeting on August 4, 2003 and again, in more detail, on September 18, 2003.

The current leash ordinance that relates to City parks only includes Brackenridge, Koehler and Comanche Lookout Parks. Specifically, Section 22-56 of the City Code reads, "It shall be unlawful for any person to take a dog or cat into Brackenridge, Koehler or Comanche Lookout Parks, unless the animal is restrained on a leash, or into the zoological areas contiguous to Brackenridge and Koehler Parks under any circumstances." All other parks allow that dogs be

off a leash, as long as they are restrained by voice command, as required by the ordinance that affects all other public areas.

In addition to Woodlawn Lake Park, the Park Police and other Parks and Recreation staff have identified additional parks to include in the ordinance, including Alamo Plaza, La Villita, Market Square and the River Walk in the downtown area within District 1, Eisenhower Park in District 8 and Medina River Park in District 4. Some of these parks have had existing operational policies that restrict pets, but they have not been enforceable policies. With the ordinance, it shall be unlawful to take any pet into these parks unless the animal is restrained on a leash. City Council offices were contacted to determine whether there are additional parks that should be included in the leash ordinance that relates to City parks. Council District 4 requested that Pearsall Park be added, excluding the new "dog park" area.

Two additional park areas have been identified that will restrict pets altogether, due to the environmentally sensitive nature of the property, which are Friedrich Park in District 8 and Crownridge Canyon Nature Area in District 8. Friedrich Park has operated under this policy for approximately twenty years and the ordinance will facilitate its enforcement. The newest nature park is Crownridge Canyon, and bird habitat and other environmentally sensitive areas in that location warrant restriction of pets. Pets, restrained or unrestrained, are considered an "inappropriate recreational activity" in the "Land Use and Management Planning Guidelines for Natural Areas" adopted by City Council by Ordinance 97502 on January 16, 2003.

Also, the ordinance will include new language that will require pets to be kept on a leash during all community special events held in City parks that are open to the public, such as during the Jazz'SAlive event at Travis Park or the New Year's Eve event in HemisFair Park. In the past, loose pets have detracted from the enjoyment of some events.

POLICY ANALYSIS

This action is consistent with the City's policy of regulating the use of City facilities through the City Code. The proposed revision was discussed at the City Council Governance Committee meeting on July 2, 2003 and at the Economic and Human Development Committee on August 4, 2003 and September 18, 2003. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was informed of the ordinance revision on August 18, 2003.

FISCAL IMPACT

This action will require minor expenditures for the erection of suitable signage at applicable parks. The cost for signage is included in our on-going operational budget; consequently, this action will place no additional demands on the City's General Fund.

COORDINATION

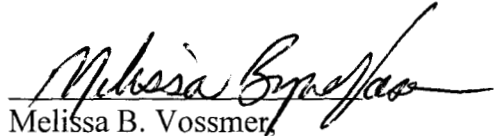
The preparation of this ordinance was coordinated with City Council District offices and with the City Attorney's Office.

SUPPLEMENTARY COMMENTS

A Discretionary Contracts Disclosure Form is not required.



Malcolm Matthews,
Director of Parks and Recreation



Melissa B. Vossmer,
Assistant City Manager

Approved:



Terry M. Brechtel
City Manager

RECEIVED
CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
CITY CLERK

CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
INTERDEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE SHEET

03 MAY 29 PM 7:54

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Councilman Julián Castro, District 7


COPIES TO: Terry Brechtel, City Manager; Yolanda Ledesma, Acting City Clerk; Andrew Martin, City Attorney; File

SUBJECT: Review of Leash Law

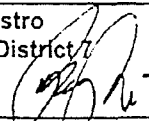
DATE: May 21, 2003

I respectfully request your support in directing staff to conduct a review of the current San Antonio leash law, including fines for violation of the existing law and a comparison to other Texas cities. Findings should be presented at the next meeting of the Urban Affairs Committee.

Your favorable consideration of this matter is appreciated.

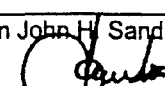

Julian Castro
Councilman, District 7


Mayor Ed Garza


Councilman Bobby Perez, District 1

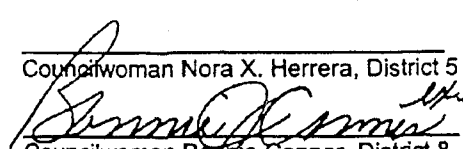
Councilman John H. Sanders, District 2

Councilwoman Toni Moorhouse, District 3


Councilman Enrique Martin, District 4

Councilwoman Nora X. Herrera, District 5

Councilman Enrique M. Barrera, District 6


Councilwoman Bonnie Conner, District 8

Councilman Carroll Schubert, District 9


Councilman David Carpenter, District 10

exempt cats!