

A fluffy white puppy is running towards the camera on a grassy field. The puppy has its mouth open, showing its pink tongue and teeth, and its ears are perked up. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green field.

OUR PLANS FOR

POOCHES

AND PARKS



Hamilton City Council

Te kaunihera o Kirikiriroa



WE WANT TO PROVIDE FAMILY AND DOG FRIENDLY PARKS BY MAKING AREAS SAFE AND FUN FOR PEOPLE AND THEIR POOCHES

We know dogs bring joy and companionship, and for many of our residents their pooch is part of the family. It's important for dog owners to have areas where they can exercise their pets, both off and on a leash. This plan outlines where new dog exercise areas will be established in the city along with two new fenced dog exercise areas. It also discusses how we intend to make the central city more dog friendly and provides an overview of actions to launch an etiquette campaign aimed at both people who own pooches and those who don't.

WHAT WE KNOW

Hamilton has more than 10,000 registered dogs with numbers increasing

Dogs need regular exercise to stay happy and healthy. It relieves boredom, releases pent up energy and may even stop unwanted behaviour such as excessive barking. Walking the dog is a social activity too, both for pooches and their owners.

Dog-friendly outdoor spaces are especially important for inner city dog dwellers, where there's not as much space for them to exercise. We also understand that some people don't like dogs, and others are afraid of them. Some of our residents may feel that having dog-friendly parks will mean there will be dogs running amok and there will be poop that isn't picked up. We want to ensure that doesn't happen.



WHO LED THE PROCESS

The working group comprised Deputy Mayor Gordon Chesterman, Cr Angela O'Leary, Cr Leo Tooman, Zoe Toombs from Sport Waikato and Clare Browne PHD student in dog training and behaviour. We also established a focus group with representatives from Hamilton Dog Obedience Club, Phoenix Dog Training Group, Kool K9 Training, NZ Police and Hamilton City Council's Disability Advisor.



WHAT OUR COMMUNITY HAS TOLD US

We asked the community how well the current dog exercise parks are working for both dog owners and other park users.

We discovered that:

- 🐾 most people exercise their dog daily or a few times a week
- 🐾 dogs and their owners love Days' Park and Hamilton Gardens
- 🐾 Minogue, Braithwaite, Resthills and Claudelands Parks are popular too
- 🐾 people and their pooches go to dog exercise areas outside their local neighbourhood
- 🐾 most dog owners drive to a dog exercise park and are happy to drive for 15 minutes or longer to get to the right park
- 🐾 typically, they'll stay for less than an hour.

You told us you appreciate what we have in Hamilton but would like:

- 🐾 better dog etiquette awareness
- 🐾 better signage
- 🐾 more dog exercise areas close to home
- 🐾 existing off-leash boundaries to be realigned so they're more logical
- 🐾 the extras that are important to dogs and their owners, like more bins, waste disposal bags and drinking water for our four legged friends
- 🐾 a fenced area just for dogs to exercise
- 🐾 a large destination dog park.

WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO

CREATE A DOG-FRIENDLY CENTRAL CITY

Our four-legged friends are welcome in the central city, provided they are on a leash. We'd like to make the city even more dog friendly, and to make that happen, we'd like to encourage more dog friendly businesses.

Ideas include:

- 🐾 stickers which dog-friendly businesses can display in their windows
- 🐾 hitching posts so dog owners can keep a careful eye on their pets while they're inside shops
- 🐾 more outdoor dining areas so diners can bring their dogs
- 🐾 bring back the Caro Street dog run
- 🐾 forming partnerships with businesses to provide more rubbish bins, waste bag dispensers, park benches and drinking fountains in the city.

DOG ETIQUETTE CAMPAIGN

We plan to launch a public education programme to ensure responsible dog ownership is the norm and dog owners, dogs and everyone else get along well together. We want to make sure dog owners are well versed in the care and control of their pets, and to ensure the public knows more about issues such as safety around dogs.

We'll work with dog obedience clubs and other service providers in the city to ensure this is a successful campaign.



THE RIGHT SIGNS

We need signs that provide effective and clear messages. They need to be welcoming, informative and provide the kind of information all park users need.



PICKING UP THE POOP

We need to 'paws' to think about this. We expect dog owners to clean up after their pets, and that means picking up their poop. To make it simple to dispose of once it's collected, we plan to install bins and waste bag dispensers at all off-leash parks.



FENCED DOG EXERCISE AREAS

We plan to work with dog agility groups to create two fenced dog exercise areas at Innes Common and Melville Park.

The area earmarked for Melville Park is adjacent to the Waikato Dog Agility and Hamilton Dog Obedience Club and will be for bigger dogs that are still being trained. The Innes Common site will be for smaller dogs, shy dogs, and puppies.



NEW DOG EXERCISE AREAS

Our community has told us they are happy with Hamilton's dog exercise areas, but they would like more areas closer to home. To cater for our existing dog lovers, and the increasing number of future pooch owners, we plan to introduce eight new dog exercise areas in parks over the next 10 years. They'll come with the right signage and extra bins, waste bag dispensers and dog drinking fountains.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

We aim to work with funding partners to establish the new facilities. When funding has been secured, we will roll out facilities in our existing parks first.



CITY MAP



DOG EXERCISE AREAS

KEY















