

**From:** gjohnso2@charter.net [mailto:gjohnso2@charter.net]

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 18, 2015 7:23 PM

**To:** Council

**Cc:** Kathy Bergen; duluthdogparks@yahoo.com

**Subject:** Riley Road Dog Park Proposal

I am writing today to encourage you to approve the Riley Road Dog Park Proposal when you meet on Monday, August 31. This is of great importance to many people throughout the city of Duluth as well as a benefit to those visiting our beautiful city with their furry companions.

I live in the Spirit Valley area and am a frequent visitor to Keene Dog Park with my dog, Bomber. I am very grateful that I have this wonderful resource in my neighborhood. It is wonderful to be able to get out with my dog and spend time with others who share my love of dogs. We have become a strong community, something that is often lacking in today's society. I have come to know many of the "regulars" and their dogs better than I know my own neighbors.

I also have gone to Observation Dog Park when I am near that area with Bomber. It gives us both a change of environment with new people to get to know.

Each of these dog parks offers something unique. Keene will always be our "home base" as it is only six blocks from our home. It is very convenient to go there after work when I don't have as much time as I do on the weekends. While not particularly large, it does give him room to run and explore.

Observation, while much smaller than Keene, is good for a quick stop for a little run. The view is beautiful and the ground is much more forgiving when it is rainy or icy, clearing up much quicker than Keene. It is a wonderful asset for that neighborhood, giving people an option close to home.

I have seen the proposal for the Riley Road Park and, while I would have loved the larger option that had been proposed, I am very excited at the prospect of having a much larger park than what is currently available to use. The proposal includes a walking path around the perimeter of the park. This would be a fantastic feature for me personally. My dog is 75 lbs of solid muscle...who is not overly fond of walking on a leash. Because of that, he is difficult for me to walk in the neighborhood. The Riley Road Park would give me the ability to walk with him as he could be off leash safely and legally. It would be wonderful for us to be able to both get some exercise, thus improving my health while spending time with my dog...my favorite way to spend my free time. I'm sure there are many in this city who would benefit from a park that was large enough for, and designed to include, a walking path. It would also mean that people on the East side of Duluth would not have to drive across town to use a dog park.

As I am sure you know, this park would be built and funded primarily by volunteers. We are asking very little from the city other than the use of the land. Given that, and the benefit to the many dog owners in this city, I urge you to approve this proposal.

I would like to close by inviting each of you to visit the current dog parks and see the benefits they provide to both dog and owner. Visit the website that was created <http://www.duluthdogparks.com/> and the Duluth Dog Park Facebook page to see the community that has been created.

Thank you for your time and your consideration.

Ginger Johnson (and Bomber)