

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS KENDRA LARA, RICARDO ARROYO, BOK, BREADON, COLETTA, FERNANDES ANDERSON, FLAHERTY, LOUIJEUNE, MEJIA, MURPHY AND WORRELL



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING REGARDING THE POTENTIAL USAGE OF CITY-OWNED LAND FOR OFF-LEASH DOG PARKS

WHEREAS, According to the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Spending time with pets has been proven to improve human wellness, decrease stress, as well as keep people comfortable; *and*

WHEREAS, The Boston Globe reported on March 27, 2020, that pets saw massive rates of adoption during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, with odds of 2,000 applications for every 200 pets due to the loneliness and isolation that people faced; *and*

WHEREAS, There are currently only six off-leash dog parks in the entire city of Boston: three in Dorchester, one in the North End, one in the South End, and one in Allston; *and*

WHEREAS, There are more than 11,553 registered dogs in Boston, with 1,100 in the neighborhood of Jamaica Plain, the highest rate among zip codes in the city, but zero off-leash recreation spaces in the entire neighborhood; *and*

WHEREAS, In the city of Boston, there currently exists 261 city-owned sites, which represents 21% of all total vacant or underutilized parcels (0.7 million square feet) that have no plan in the works but also have a low opportunity for development or community use; *and*

WHEREAS, 237 of those vacant and underutilized parcels are owned by the Mayor's Office of Housing, and the Public Works Department holds 12; *and*

WHEREAS, These parcels, which are too small or oddly shaped for other development, have the potential to become un-leashed dog parks in Jamaica Plain, West Roxbury, Hyde Park, or other neighborhoods in the City; *and*

WHEREAS, Dog parks serve the dual role of providing a community space for people to gather as well as an area for dogs and members of our community to socialize; *and*

WHEREAS, According to the National Recreation and Parks Association, dog parks can rejuvenate underutilized spaces while providing vibrant, active parks for people, dogs, and community; **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT**

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council will hold a hearing regarding the potential usage of city-owned parcels of land for dog parks. Representatives from the Parks Department and advocates from the community are invited to testify.