

THE CHARISMATIC DOG AND PUBLIC SPACE:
ARE DOG PARKS A THIRD PLACE?

by

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Abstract

The charismatic dog and public space: Are dog parks a third place?

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Existing research supports dog parks as a third place based on the ability of dog-supportive public space to bring people together informally outside home and work (Graham and Glover, 2014), yet offers little clarity in terms of strength of interaction. Ray Oldenburg (1989), the originator of the notion of third place, stresses the importance of certain contexts in supporting repeat encounters, which he explains are of crucial importance to effective third places, while lamenting their absence in suburban America. A careful review of his work in this dissertation raises the question, is a dog park within a suburban Dallas context capable of supporting an effective third place?

This research consists of two case studies. The first compares social interaction within two dog parks, one in New Urban Addison Circle, a mixed use, compact neighborhood, and the other located nearby within a traditional suburban North Dallas neighborhood considering the two dog parks are comparable in terms of watering and facilities. The second case study controls for context by comparing the social interaction in the New Urban dog park with a small non-dog park located two blocks away within the same New Urban neighborhood. This study's overall

thesis is that to qualify as an effective third place, parks must meet detailed criteria as laid out by Oldenburg (1989). The study's main research questions address the following additional theses: 1) Social interaction in dog parks can go beyond casual greetings associated with urban parks to be stimulators of meaningful face-to-face social interaction; 2) The neighborhood's urban densities and mixtures of use may modulate the effectiveness of face-to-face interaction and strength of ties occurring in dog parks.

Data derived from six weeks of observation and interviews of users within these parks compare macro- and micro-level contextual variations against the rate, quality, and strength of social interaction taking place in each park. The research supports the dog park as a third place in either the suburban or urban setting, while concluding stronger ties may be associated with the New Urban context.

Glossary

Definition of key terms. The following terms were used throughout the research process.

Acquaintances: People users remember having met at least once (Webster's, n.d.). This relationship will be confirmed by researcher during observations and interviews.

Critical mass. Supports continuous flows of people throughout neighborhoods important to support businesses (Jacobs, 1961).

Effective third places (Oldenburg, 1989): Support spontaneous, repeat encounters, mixing, sorting, leveling, repeat encounters and friendships associated with weak ties.

Enjoy: Taking pleasure in something, as exhibited by smiles, laughter and other expressions positive in appearance (Webster's, n.d.).

Influential design features. Those associated with warmth, sterility or pretention, which can support or deny conversation and repeat exchanges (Oldenburg, 1989). Whether parks are socially accepting and psychologically comfortable may partially depend on micro-level design features, like shaded areas, seating configurations, and water features.

Leveling: Balancing of interaction amongst people to common characteristics or equality (Oldenburg, 1989).

Meaningful interaction. Involves face-to-face exchanges with a sense of having shared something with another human being beyond surface friendliness and exchanging personal information, such as differences, identities, goals or interests. Rabinowitz (n.d.) explains, meaningful interaction can happen in a moment's time, and it supports a sense of belonging and

good community relations. As Oldenburg (1989) explains, both strong and weak ties can be meaningful, and both are important to healthy social lives.

Mixing: Bringing together people of different ages, socioeconomic classifications and cultural backgrounds (Oldenburg, 1989).

Neighboring: Includes getting together and sharing meaningful face-to-face interaction at a home or establishment. This definition of neighboring is more inclusive than the definition used by General Social Survey.

New Urban. Medium densities, gridded streets, frequent open space and diverse housing to reduce driving and encourage pedestrian flows and social capital (Duany, Speck, & Lydon, 2009).

Relaxation: State of being free from tension and anxiety; or restoration of equilibrium (Webster's, n.d.).

Repeat encounters: Seeing people repeatedly where recognition occurs for one or more of the people involved.

Social interaction: Face to face verbal communication between humans.

Sorting: Grouping people together based on conversation and similar interests (Oldenburg, 1989).

Spontaneous encounters: Seeing people without prior planning or premeditation (Oldenburg, 1989).

Strong tie: Associated with reciprocity, emotional intensity and intimacy, commonly involving family, neighbors and co-workers, who neighbor or have get-togethers (Wellman, 1988; Llewellyn, 2019).

Walkability: a quality found in some urban spaces or neighborhoods that provides convenient, well-connected, comfortable, permeable, safe and usable walkable facilities for pedestrians (Litman, 2007).

Weak tie: Involves community and civic groups and casual interaction without neighboring or get-togethers (Wellman, 1988; Llewellyn, 2019). Similar to Lin (2001), who associates weak ties with reduced tendencies for conflict, Oldenburg (1989) views the less obligatory nature of weak ties as positive and characteristic of the casual chance encounters involved in third place friendships.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

There was a time in America when neighbors visited neighbors and participated in their local PTA. Increasing divorce rates and declines in group membership beginning in the sixties unfolded in a phenomenon which Putnam (1995) brought to light in 'Bowling Alone: America's declining social capital'. Reported tendencies to live alone and spend more time alone, even in recreation, suggest an evolution or mutation of social networks in response to changes in communication, mobility and land-use patterns. Modern networks increasingly reflect a paradoxical relationship between a society highly connected through highways and technology yet fragmented in terms of community. Since introduction of the TV tray into the mainstream, Americans have grown increasingly reliant on technology. The wave of change in the sixties that came with television brought declines in newspaper circulation and social activities like going out to movies, which had become difficult for suburban families, with theatres often located downtown. By the 80s, widespread use of the VCR further privatized entertainment (Baughman, 1993), as Americans adapted to a new technological society by consuming more and more electronics. As Turkle (2011, p. 17) explains, "[o]verwhelmed by the volume and velocity of our lives, we turn to technology to help us find time. But technology makes us busier than ever and ever more in search of retreat."

The dense village structure that allowed people to be in close quarters (Pinker, 2017) broke into an expanded urban landscape, which separated everyday needs from residential areas (Oldenburg, 1989). This led to looser social networks (Putnam, 1995) compared to historically tight social circles of family, work and community (Rainie and Wellman, 2012). Americans are now networked individuals, explain Rainie and Wellman (2012), loosely connected through

internet communications and transportation technology. Given the obvious practical benefits of technology, should we embrace this logic? Are communications and transportation holding distant families together or are they merely a means of coping with an ever-expanding landscape that is pulling us apart?

Recounting virtuous, virtual communities where common interests find each other without the necessity of a stroll to the corner, Rheingold (1993) suggests motorization, sprawl and declining informal public space drive people to the internet as a social outlet which lacks privacy and makes more passive activities an easy option. Should cyber networks qualify as social networks? Can emoji's effectively substitute for human emotions, and can individuals truly support each other in cyber space? According to Pinker (2014), the village structure is supportive of people caring for each other. Noting the importance of face-to-face contact and physical proximity to human health, psychological and sociological studies indicate our aloneness is a public health risk (Pinker, 2014). According to Wolchover (2014), overuse of communication devices can be harmful psychologically, as demonstrated by Internet Use Disorder¹, which according to Spraggins (2009), is linked with poor self-esteem and depression. Such abuses can restructure the brain (Yuan, 2011), weaken abilities to communicate and lead to social anxiety (Erwin, Turk, Heimberg, Fresco & Hantula, 2004; Kraut, Patterson, Lundmark, Kiesler,

¹ Internet Use Disorder (IUD) is an addiction to Internet gaming. Its symptoms include a preoccupation with gaming, withdrawal symptoms (such as anxiety and irritability) while offline, the need to spend increasing amounts of time gaming (called "tolerance"), loss of other interests and hobbies, inability to limit gaming time, use of gaming to improve mood, deception of family and friends about extent of use, and jeopardizing opportunities because of gaming. Although IUD is most closely associated with addiction to online gaming, many scientific studies of the condition expand its definition to include excessive Web use in general.

Mukhopadhyay & Scherlis, 1998; Pierce, 2009; Philippot, 2011). As youth growing up within looser networks naturally embrace associated lifestyle and group identities (Carroll, Howard, Vetere, Peck, & Murphy, 2002), it seems our emojis are not quite doing the job. As 21st century adults are exposed to media 10.3 hours each day (Austin, Barnard, & Hutcheon, 2015), there is reason to believe that media increasingly defines what is real for passive Americans hungering for sociability (Oldenburg, 1989). Young people, explains Oldenburg, who once socialized with friends in drug-store soda fountains, leaving parents at ease, now hang out in parking lots, consuming more and more private entertainment, while focusing more on themselves than the public good.

As both children and adults seek entertainment within spacious, technologically savvy homes, (Oldenburg, 1989) tight schedules, traffic jams and stress encourage sedentary behaviors linked to 11% of healthcare expenditures (Carlson Fulton, Pratt, Yang, and Adams, 2015). Nevertheless, taxpayers continue to subsidize federal highway expansion at nearly a trillion dollars per year (Bernick & Cervero, 1997), leaving cars and petroleum products at the top of the American shopping list and encouraging reliance on auto-related industries and their dominance in American politics (Golub, n.d.). Our hectic pace is not due to modernity, explains Oldenburg (1989), but to post World War II highway construction, urban renewal, and zoning practices that have kept gathering places, such as public swimming pools, out of neighborhoods. As homes now house more recreation, placeless spaces focused on fast service train suburbanites to minimize human contact. Those lonely and stressed seek massage, meditation and consumer goods to compensate for an empty urban life (Oldenburg, 1989). Oldenburg credits an unsuitable habitat with irritating and causing Americans to seek escape and interaction through the

workplace as a substitute for third place (Oldenburg, 1989). The reasons Americans are working more is a matter of debate. While Hoschchild (1997) recognizes work as a haven from the social strains of family through supportive coworkers and career recognition, Schor (1991), an economist, credits consumerism and profit-seeking employers with contributing to an overworked American. Though obsessive behaviors and consumer dominance has been noted (Norris, 2003), Maume and Bellas (2001) find no evidence that consumerism results in longer hours, explaining that only a minority of workers enjoy work over family.

The Third Place. Oldenburg coined the term “third place” to refer to a variety of public places beyond the realms of home and work, which host “regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings” within core settings, which are essential to a vital informal life (Oldenburg, 1989, p. 16). Oldenburg makes a distinction between the first place of home and the second of work in recognition of the creation of suburban residential districts and their post-industrial separation from the workplace. Prior to that time, third places had minimized the importance of home by providing an alternative place to relax. In a world where people increasingly live alone and work from home (U. S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2019), the realms of home, work and play are blurred, causing one to question whether people truly relax anymore. As advertising exploits desires for pleasure and convinces us the good life can be purchased, high entertainment costs discourage going out, and passive home entertainment leaves us unsatisfied (Oldenburg, 1989). Without balance between the three realms of home, work and leisure, people tend to put too much pressure on family, explains Oldenburg (1989), or rely too much on the workplace as a substitute for community.

A quest for community. Sims (1920) notes a vital phase of social life is missing--community itself. It is in community, which is essential to the formation of friendships, as Wu (n.d.) explains, where casual interactions can develop into something more. In discussing a search for community (Lerner, 1957, as cited in Oldenburg, 1989, p. 3) explains, “[t]he critical question is not whether the small town can be rehabilitated in the image of its earlier strength and growth—for clearly it cannot--but whether American life will be able to evolve any other integral community to replace it.” Despite the potential for technology to keep us connected, Oldenburg (1989) points out that no list of contacts can achieve instant community. Virtual online spaces may offer potential for community, yet these spaces can be exclusionary (Soukup, 2006). Open space and parks, linked to sociability (Lund, 2003; Baum & Palmer, 2002), higher collective efficacy (Cohen, Inagami & Finch, 2008) and greater sense of community (Kim & Kaplan, 2004, Joongsub & Kaplan, 2004) offer some hope, but reported tendencies for dogs to encourage people to talk relative to such spaces demonstrate a potential for powerful social effects (Christian, Giles-Corti & Knuiman (2010); Messent, 1983).

The charismatic dog and third place. Three decades of surging retail expenditures for pet-related services (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2017) may be indicative of an intrinsic hunger for companionship. Considered family, as Veilleux (1999) reports, and even substituting for children according to Sanders (1999), pets appear to support better physical health (Cutt, Gile-Corti, Knuiman, Timperio & Bull, 2008) and increased human social support (Wood, Martin, Christian, Nathan, Lauritsen, Houghton, et al. (2015). Though pet owners with low social support and high pet attachment may be linked to loneliness and depression (Antonacopoulos & Pychyl,

2010), where environmental factors permit walking, pet owners are more often linked to sociability and the development of human relationships (Robins, Sanders and Cahill, 1991).

Given human needs for social support, dogs may be filling in gaps where our social systems have failed, considering Wood et al. (2015). Graham & Glover (2014) in a Canadian study, illuminate the influence of dogs over human sociability, as well as the role of dog-supportive public space in providing a common ground for communication. With significant potential to promote both expressive and instrumental action, and a leveling function, Graham and Glover (2014) give the dog park third-place status. Though third places often rely on caffeine as a stimulant or alcohol as a social lubricant (Oldenburg, 1989), dog parks may rely upon the presence of dogs as a social lubricant to bring people together.

Statement of the problem. Oldenburg (1989, p. 16) defines the third place as a variety of public places which host “regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings” beyond the realms of home and work. Observing a general failure of an expanded Post World War II landscape to support repeat encounters and a tendency to depersonalize recreation (Oldenburg, 1989), one might question whether dog parks deserve the distinction of third place. Using the proliferation of such destinations in Europe as a model, Oldenburg (1989) makes clear the importance of neighborhood context. As he explains, anticipation of spontaneously running into certain regulars requires they be quotidian and convenient enough to draw people from individual neighborhoods repeatedly.

New Urbanists also look to a European model, while Leccese and McCormick (2000) emphasize the potential of medium densities, public space and a diversity of land uses to support

socioeconomic diversity, less driving² and increased cycling, walking and related social capital. Though every New Urban development has not achieved all these goals, some have been linked to heightened walkability and sociability. Though studies testing the effectiveness of New Urbanism have sometimes used pre-World War II developments as a proxy, Dill (2006), testing a New Urban development, failed to find the diversity, sense of community, or directly relate reduced driving to the development, yet the study did find New Urban residents with a propensity to walk were more likely to know their neighbors.

One must realize, however, that no matter how functional they may appear, New Urban developments do not exist in a vacuum but are part of a wider urban regional context that, in the absence of efficient regional transit, remain auto-dependent. Despite attempts to pinpoint ideal mixtures of destinations for just the right level of social interaction, New Urbanism may never fully achieve the walkability, diversity, or authentic spontaneity presumed of pre-automobile urban settings or the European models that inspired Oldenburg. However, dog parks, as a third place, may be culturally adept at satisfying the increasing sociability and community needs of present-day American suburbanites and their pets either in New Urban or conventional suburban settings.

In seeking a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of social experience and perceptions of dog park culture, a sensitive inquiry of dog park users sought to investigate the influences which may shape interaction and friendships within the park setting, while allowing themes and factors to emerge and reveal relationships between contextual factors and the rate,

² [I]ncreases density and creates more intimate streets that encourage walking (Duany et al., 2009).

quality and strength of face-to-face social interaction. To assist classification and understanding of urban context, Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Company (2003) developed the “Smart Code” rural to urban transect classification system. By analyzing behavioral characteristics within three parks in two Dallas-area neighborhoods, the study assessed the importance of urban contextual characteristics on third place functionality, guided by Oldenburg (1989).

Through data derived from observation and interviews of users of a traditional urban park and a dog park within the same New Urban community and a comparable dog park within a nearby suburban community, this study seeks an understanding of the influence of urban context on the rate, quality, and strength of social interaction and evidence to support the thesis that: 1) Social interaction in dog parks can go beyond the casual greetings linked to urban parks to be stimulators of meaningful face-to-face social interaction; 2) urban densities and mixtures of use may modulate the effectiveness of face-to-face interaction and strength of ties occurring in dog parks. To facilitate understanding of dog park culture and the influence of urban context, the central organizing theme will be Oldenburg’s third-place, which includes the presence of a low-key atmosphere with few expectations, spontaneous encounters with regulars, and the mixing and leveling of diverse populations.

Research Question 1. The first research question asks how the urban/suburban context impacts the effectiveness of dog park activity?

Does context affect the type and strength of relationships that form within the parks, and is the quantity of neighboring or visiting behavior affected? The question requires comparing the two communities—the conventional suburban and New Urban—with attention to macro-level influences, including the dog parks’ locations relative to land-use mix, intensity and density,

walkability, physical configuration, and location and accessibility within the region relative to research by Christian, et al. (2010) and Dill (2006). The study considers each park's location in relation to pathways and the neighborhood's ability to allow for unthreatening and safe pedestrian street crossing in relation to significant numbers of homes and leisure-oriented destinations. The study considers each park's micro-culture, including noise levels, dress, user attitudes, park aesthetics, perceptions of comfort, and whether socioeconomic factors support inclusivity, as reflected in the surrounding community.

Comparing each park to Oldenburg's concept of third place, observations and interviews assess whether a low key, warm, accepting atmosphere is evidenced and whether spontaneous repeat encounters occur. After detailing the presence or absence of functional gates to control canines, fencing, trash receptacles, water fountains and configurations of park seating, research observed and assessed the frequency of repeat encounters, the presence of acquaintances and regulars, mixing, leveling and other behavior between park users. Researcher also evaluated the influence of dogs, dog breeds, and behaviors of other users on social interaction within the parks.

Researcher hypothesized that weak rather than strong ties would be predominant but that more visiting outside the park would occur relative to the New Urban dog park than the regular urban park or the suburban dog park. Researcher also hypothesized that day-time park users may be more motivated to meet others and may recognize neighbors more, but that irregular schedules may make them less likely to experience repeat encounters.

Research Question 2. The second research question controls for the influence of neighborhood context and asks whether interaction differs in the dog park and the traditional non-dog park, both located within the same New Urban community.

The question considers how neighborhood design impacts the effectiveness of the two parks as catalysts for third-place activity and neighboring—controlling for the effects of context and identifying third place attributes by comparing the New Urban dog park with the New Urban non-dog park. Guided by Lund (2003), Dill (2006), Baum and Palmer (2002), Christian, et al. (2010) and Oldenburg (1989), researcher assessed walkability, feelings of comfort or control over pets, and the quantity, type and quality of face-to-face social interaction that occurs within the two parks. The question also considers the social influence of design characteristics and aesthetics on feelings of safety, walking behavior and face-to-face human interaction related to Lund (2003) and Baum and Palmer (2002). Research indicating dog walkers in a London park speak to strangers more often than those walking alone (Messent, 1983) suggests a dog's presence may be a significant influence, while Robins, et al. (1991) report dogs facilitate the development of social relationships.

Researcher quantified the time humans spent speaking face-to-face, the type and quality of their interaction, and the strength of ties. Granovetter (1973) evaluates strength of ties according to time spent together, reciprocity, emotional intensity, and intimacy, while Wellman (1988) bases tie strength on frequency of get togethers. Since Wellman (1988) describes weak ties as involving community- and civic-group affiliation, weak ties, for purposes of this research include those park users who see each other but who do not visit each other or socialize outside the park. Due to loosened social structures and recent declines in neighboring, any park users

who visited outside the park were viewed as strong ties. Type of social interaction was evaluated based on observations of the presence or absence of spontaneous, repeat encounters, mixing, leveling, signs of enjoyment, relaxation, and other aspects of face-to-face social interaction (Oldenburg, 1989), including the influence of dogs on human interaction based on research by Robins et al. (1991).

Chapter 2: Literature Review.

This chapter discusses literature relevant to this topic and is followed by a summary and conclusions of the material.

Needs for social support. Noting a public health risk associated with our aloneness, Pinker (2014) writes about the importance of face-to-face contact and physical proximity to human health. When human beings come together, we benefit from each other through greater access to information, linked indirectly to improved health (Umberson and Montez, 2010) and more directly, through improved physical and psychological health due to physical proximity (Pinker, 2014) and supportive relationships (Kawachi & Berkman, 2001; Cutrona Russell & Rose (1986). Social capital, a benefit linked to individual social investments, spill over to benefit others in a number of ways (Bourdieu, 1986). Kawachi and Berkman (2001) report improved mental health, including improved self-esteem, inspiration and nurturance abilities due to greater social support. Cutrona et al. (1986) report less depression and other disorders. In addition to and partially attributable to these psychological benefits, physical health is affected, with strong social support linked to improved recovery after an infection (Cohen et al., 1997), healthy aging (Yang , Boen, & Harris, 2015), and reduced death rates (Ruberman et al. 1984).

Tie strength: The ties that bind. As Oldenburg (1989) points out, there are also costs tied to human relationships, costs and benefits which vary according to the strength and value of those relationships. To better comprehend these effects, researchers have used different measures to quantify the strength of social ties. According to Granovetter (1973), tie strength is a linear combination of time spent together, emotional intensity, intimacy, and reciprocal services. Sociologists place labels on different types of human relationships, which can vary.

While Wellman (1988) and Llewellyn (2019) agree family is amongst our strongest ties, and co-workers, community and civic groups are weak ties, Llewellyn (2019) discusses primary ties, which are more constant and secondary ties, which can move in and out of a person's network (Llewellyn, 2019).

Though most research up to 1973 had focused on strong ties and defined groups, Granovetter (1985) widened the scope, considering micro- and macro-level influences related to both economics and sociology. His research identifies weak ties as achieving a greater social distance through diverse influences, which expand social circles, enrich knowledge and expose people to life-altering career paths. Does this mean strong ties are unimportant? Not at all. As Wu (n.d.) explains, strong ties may be rare, more of an achievement, and more related to enjoyment and social support, while weak ties are more numerous, supporting multiple opportunities to connect. The value of weak ties then lies in higher numbers, explains Wu, and in their ability to bridge gaps. All ties start out as weak, he explains, and all depend on community, wherein they can develop into something more, dependent upon repeat encounters, common interests and meaningful interaction (Wu, n.d.).

The benefits of third place. Similar to Wu's analysis, which emphasizes community, Oldenburg (1989) relates the number and type of strong ties a person has to the number of weak tie acquaintances their environment delivers. Since closest friends are rarely closest neighbors, he explains, a neutral ground allows a variety of opportunities to clique with like minds or to go in separate ways. In the realm of third place, separate from the first of home and the second of work, interaction is voluntary and informal, happily anticipated and regular, and it allows people to come together and break free from their more structured and obligatory home and work

environments. The low key and neutral quality of such places level the playing field, allowing a diversity of people to let their hair down and socialize with those of different professions. Interaction within these places is important to group acceptance and sense of community and is similar to affiliation (Oldenburg, 1989).

While Oldenburg (1989) suggests both weak and intimate strong ties are required for a healthy social life, he clarifies that without more intimate relations, affiliation can become overburdened, and without affiliation, intimacy can be obtrusive. With fewer costs than those of close ties, third place affiliation can be a relief from the monotony and binding nature of close friends and family, which he explains, sometimes know too much. An absence of such neighborhood gathering places, he explains, puts too much pressure on family and work for entertainment, resulting in a lack of male bonding, and women who are too involved in children- and male-dominant activities (Oldenburg, 1989).

The third place in history. Home and work had been in close quarters prior to World War II when a separation of these functions gave rise to what Oldenburg (1989) termed the third place. Throughout history, third places like the large Greek and Roman forums, minimized the importance of home. Though European pubs, cafes and beer gardens catered to smaller neighborhoods, these places also played a central role in the lives of people. Though Oldenburg (1989) stressed the importance of neutrality and the ability of third places to bring a diversity of people together, both the English coffee houses and their pubs failed to do so. Though opinion leaders and regular people came together within the multi-story coffee houses, because they excluded women, they failed to produce true leveling. The English pubs even accentuated a differentiation and division of the classes by virtue of separate rooms and partitions, while only

the less formal, open public rooms brought unity and captured the spirit of third place (Oldenburg, 1989). The early American tavern became a true melting pot, however, where ordinary citizens rubbed elbows with elected officials, using alcohol as a social lubricant.

The modern third place. Citing McLuhan (1970), Oldenburg (1989) explains a modern public of the TV age identifies less with their locality and more with the global village, while American politicians, now out of reach, are shaped by Washington special interests. According to Memorovic, Fels, Anacleto, Calderon, Gobbo, Carroll (2014), the locally oriented third places of Oldenburg's time are inapplicable to a contemporary society dedicated to internet use, which as a modern means of overcoming social insecurities, may be an important infrastructure for today's gathering places. Their study of third places within Central Paris disputes a need for regulars, as prescribed by Oldenburg, suggesting staff and playful themes can introduce a place to visitors. They claim themed establishments are superior at distracting from online entertainment, and shared activities in such places can support common bonds (Memorovic et al., 2014). Though Oldenburg (1989) notes the Parisian café as an effective third place in history, Memorovic et al. (2014) point out contemporary issues related to a lack of neutrality within transient boundaries, where street-facing patio seating supports a dominance of people watching over conversation. In comparison, virtual third space with similar transient boundaries allows people to freely bump into one another and connect through shared interests.

While the debate surrounding third space as a form of third place tends to focus on social capital, Wright (2012) clarifies that Oldenburg's standard dictates pecuniary benefits should be of minor importance. After all, Oldenburg (1989) addresses the third place as a venue for full relaxation, and he makes clear that people go to third places purely because they enjoy the

company of others. Though Memorovic et al. (2014) explain that like the third place, third space can support conversation as a dominant activity and playfulness through games, Wright (2012) points out that third space fails to achieve a sense of place and that online political forums may not always support the neutral environment that Oldenburg prescribes. Third space needs for visibility and advertising also make it difficult for these spaces to maintain a low profile.

Context and Diversity. Oldenburg (1989) points out a need for a convenience of diversion, with access to diverse people and social support through centrally located gathering places and flexible hours, which are fundamental to drawing a regular, spontaneous crowd. Though third space may accommodate third place needs for convenience due to tight schedules, Wright (2012) explains that many such spaces tend to draw similar people with similar interests. While Oldenburg (1989) reports modern American landscapes tend to support more of a transient crowd in public places, Ellis (2002) counters that sprawling networks have come to mean convenience for a modern individualistic and mobile people, who prefer privacy over community.

Macro-level cultural and systemic influences. Cultural and systemic forces have dramatically affected the way modern Americans interact. Jacobs (1961) notes the degenerative social effects of a lack of investment and vacancies within inner cities, linked to reduced street continuity and activity. Similarly, Massey and Denton (1993) illustrate the federal role in segregating a post-highway expanded landscape, which erodes traditional cultural values and social capital within inner cities. Illustrating the failings of a suburban American context to support an effective third place, Oldenburg (1989) explains, a proliferation of gathering places that cater to individual neighborhoods can support regular spontaneous gatherings of neighbors.

Yet citing federal renewal programs and efforts to increase spending for private home entertainment as leading to fewer and less convenient public gathering places, Oldenburg (1989) explains such places, now removed from distinct communities, are impersonal and unsupportive of friendship formation.

Efforts to return a street life and social activity to neighborhoods can be seen in empirical research, which indicates well-designed environments linked to a sense of safety positively affect social interaction (Lund, 2002; Lund, 2003; Ball et al., 2001; and in the case of Leyden (2003), enhanced chance encounters. Dill (2006) reports heightened sociability when parks and other destinations are within walking distance of New Urban homes. Podobnik (2009) links centrally located, walkable shops and parks with positive social influences.

Much of the literature demonstrates increased walking does not necessarily lead to increased sociability. For instance, Oldenburg (1989) details preoccupied urbanites, who walk briskly and avoid glancing at others, compared to small towners who are more likely to casually bump into people they know. Narrating a small-town life prior to World War II, Oldenburg (1989) describes gatherings of people around a central Main Street, a street itself he describes as a third place (Oldenburg, 1989). Along this street and outside store fronts, loitering is encouraged, while soda fountains and ice cream parlors allow youth and adults to engage. Similarly, Lund (2003) notes compared to destination walkers, strollers motivated by exercise, fresh air and relaxation experience increased sociability with neighbors, often near parks and shops in the inner city, potentially attributable to the presence of the longer-established businesses there. Wood, Frank, Giles-Corti (2010) also notes increased sociability in the midst of multiple destinations yet suggests a potential threshold of walkability accompanying certain mixtures of use, where

excessive activity can effectively discourage social interaction. In similar studies, Lund (2002) pinpoints leisurely walking as having positive social effects, while excluding brisk utilitarian walking.

Neighborhood connections. Similar to Oldenburg (1989), who emphasizes the importance of a sense of ownership and a natural surveillance within the third place, Jacobs (1961) expresses the importance of street activity and eyes on the street. She recommends active connections between public space and diverse destinations, while placing park seating and attractive features near the street to integrate these spaces with the surrounding neighborhood. Similarly, Dittmar and Ohland (2004) report multifunctional parks aligned with the street and within blocks of homes attract people and support activity throughout the day.

The location of dog parks within neighborhoods may be important to convenience and a sense of safety, related to comfort. Relative to walking for enjoyment as a stimulator of interaction (Lund, 2003), since dog owners tend to enjoy walking their pets, placing dog parks within walking distance of homes supports leisure walking (Christian, et al., 2010). Wood, Shannon, Bulsara, Pikora, McCormack & Giles-Corti (2008) suggest the visible presence of people walking dogs could potentially contribute to perceptions of collective safety and social activity. After the introduction of dog-supportive public space into three existing crime-ridden Seattle parks, neighborhood walkability significantly increased and crime dropped (Harnik & Bridges, 2005). Since some dog owners don't walk their dogs (Cutt et al., 2008), the question arises as to whether spacious backyards, as characteristic of lower suburban densities, may partially negate the influence of dogs on walking, given self-sufficiency in private space to satisfy a dog's exercise needs. Yet if having a dog present helps a person feel comfortable venturing into their

neighborhood, as research by Wood, Giles-Corti, & Bulsara (2005) and Christian, et al. (2010) suggest, dogs themselves have the potential to be strong mediators of pedestrian and social activity.

Micro-level cultural influences on social interaction. By bringing together certain congregations of people, establishment type affects different social behaviors. Since social contacts affect the information people are exposed to, those connections can either be instrumental and empower with increased knowledge or be expressive, while maintaining the status quo (Lin, 2001). Peters, Elands, & Buijs (2010) report urban parks are a destination type that supports a more socially diverse crowd than non-urban green space, a trait noted by Lin (2001) as associated with instrumental action and a diversity of knowledge. As Young (1995) explains, unencumbered public space can then position people to be transformed through a diverse base of talent and information. Graham and Glover (2014) report dog parks support both instrumental action linked to diversity and expressive action surrounding a common interest in canines. Their study indicates dog parks are particularly effective socially, noting their ability to bring people together outside home and work, even qualifying the dog park as a third place. Their study demonstrates that relative to neutrality and diversity, leveling occurs, where “[p]eople stop being clerks and lawyers and students and teachers and just become dog owners” (Graham & Glover, 2014, p. 9).

While emphasizing the importance of repeat encounters and regulars, Oldenburg (1989) stipulates the third place should be low key, playful and hold a psychological comfort similar to home, which supports conversation and leveling. To the extent that micro-level design factors support or hamper any of these factors, they in turn affect their functionality as a third place.

Shaded areas, water features, seating, and fencing, which affect comfort are thus influences over interaction. Similarly, where transitional holding areas and dog separation affects a park's ability to control dogs, they may affect comfort by tempering potential conflicts, such as those Gomez (2013) describe when mixing children, wildlife and dogs. Likewise, cultural and background differences, which affect knowledge and acceptance of rules and norms, can hinder the ability of some to fit in with the crowd. As Gomez (2013) notes, the fencing of dog parks supports comfort in knowing that the dogs are in a safe and secure place, and posted rules are an important means of supporting park management to level the field and support a diversity of humans and pets.

A dog's presence. As Oldenburg (1989) explains, interaction within third places has been historically influenced by beverages, such as coffee as a stimulant and alcohol as a social lubricant (Oldenburg, 1989). In a similar way, dogs can function as a social lubricant, pushing past the awkward silences when humans don't have the proclivity to interact on their own, even facilitating the development of human relationships (Robins et al., 1991). McNicholas and Collins (2000) find significantly more interaction where participants are accompanied by a dog, while Marcus (2008) indicates the presence of dogs can double encounters with acquaintances and multiply encounters with strangers by twenty. The presence of dogs themselves may help establish a sense of warmth or comfort surrounding what Beetz Uvnäs-Moberg, Julius & Kotrschal (2012) report as an increased sense of trust and social attention when someone is accompanied by a dog. Guéguen and Cicotti (2008) support this effect, finding those with a dog receive not only more smiles and casual interaction, but also experience more generosity and longer, more intimate communication, including more positive female responses to male courtship. Their research suggests this effect may be related to perceptions of dog owners as

more kind, thoughtful, sensitive, agreeable and helpful, though these attributes were not evaluated.

Graham and Glover (2014) also report negative effects of a dog's presence can hinder conversation, acceptance, and affect relationships and communities of interest, explaining dog owners navigate parks through their pets, whose characteristics influence their access to resources and networks. Noting the influence of norms, obligations and subgroup hostilities, Graham and Glover (2014) explain a dog's presence supports conversation for some yet social exclusion for others, dependent upon how dogs are perceived. Early studies of brief interaction found similar mixed results, indicating breed influences a person's reaction and interaction in the presence of different types of canines. Both Wells (2004) and Fridlund and MacDonald (1998) found more people received acknowledgements with a Labrador present than a Rottweiler, while Fridlund and MacDonald (1998) found that younger lab puppies were especially preferred amongst female participants. Similarly, Guéguen and Ciccotti (2008) report a stronger positive effect on acceptance, acknowledgements, altruism, intimate communication and courtship behavior in the presence of a lab as compared to a Rottweiler.

A means of social support. Wanda Sykes has noted that men tend to be compared to dogs, but she explains, [m]en are not dogs. Uh-uh. Dogs are loyal." (Sykes, 2006, p. 1). In addition to enhanced exercise due to a dog's acceptance and support (Cutt et al., 2008), and potential improvements in social support resulting from increased interaction in a dog's presence (Wood et al., 2015), dog ownership is linked with reduced loneliness, depression, blood pressure, cholesterol and other stress-related health conditions (Beetz et al., 2012).

Summary and Conclusions. Putnam (1995), citing technological improvements as contributing to growing isolation in America was a revelation in 1995, yet increasing use of electronic devices have worsened the problem (Rainie & Wellman, 2012), and despite some strengthening effects through virtual or third space, still fails to support the diversity of third place, according to Wright (2012). Oldenburg (1989) stresses the importance of neutrality in bringing diverse groups together so that people are able to find someone to clique with while supporting an anticipation of seeing certain regulars.

Graham and Glover (2014) in their identification of dog parks as a third place bring up a good point, yet Oldenburg's critical stance on the ability of suburban development to support regulars leads one to question the relevance of neighborhood context. As Oldenburg (1989) explains, a convenient and safe walkable environment is crucial to supporting the casual convenience required to attract regulars. Wood, et al. (2010) explain walkability is a key supporting sociability, where interesting destinations and street frontage rather than surface parking work together to bring people out in their communities.

A dearth of existing literature regarding the health and psychological effects related to dog ownership and heightened sociability associated with dog-supportive places brings us to question (1) whether dog parks can facilitate third-place interaction missing in the community experience of current day Americans; and (2) whether the neighborhood context surrounding the parks significantly shape the quality, type and frequency of such interaction.

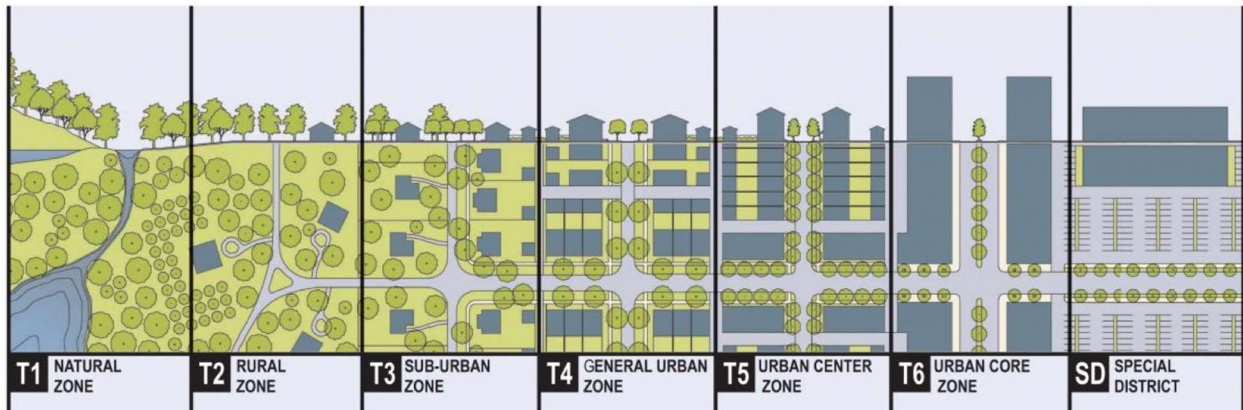
Chapter 3: Research approach and design.

This chapter first explains the research approach taken, referencing literature used in support of the design of the study. This is followed by a description of research design, including the two case studies and the study thesis. An explanation of the data collection follows, including a schedule and detail of observation methods and the documentation of dogs and their breeds. Next is an account of the interview process, including the selection of participants and a description of the park user profile and interview questions. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to a narrative describing the methods utilized to analyze the data, which lead to synthesis of the data and the study's findings and conclusions.

Research approach. The research is interpretive and constructivist, relative to multiple, socially constructed realities and formed through interaction with individuals (Merriam, 2009). Urged by Laws and McLeod (2006) and Leddington and Watson (1998), the research takes an inclusive approach by embracing diversity and pluralism, carefully considering multiple truths and respecting all views equally (Merriam, 2009). The case study approach informed by Flyvbjerg (2013) seeks a subtle, in-depth understanding of phenomenon specific to this local environment and facilitates respect for variables and the diverse meanings of the populations under study. The "Smart Code" rural to urban transect classification system (T-Zone) was used to assist in classifying the varying elements of the built environment under study to support analysis (Duany, et al., 2003). In the field, definitions of weak and strong ties are loosely based on both Llewellyn (2019) and Wellman (1988), and concepts are taken from Oldenburg (1989) to identify emerging themes consistent with third-place activity. In accordance with Federal regulations regarding

privacy, researcher made every attempt to maintain the anonymity of participants throughout the study.

Figure 1. T-Zones of the Urban-to-Rural Transect (Steuteville 2017).



Like all living things, the third place is vulnerable to its environment. Though it is capable of thriving in a variety of urban forms, it is rare in newer urban environments. Far more important than the architecture and appointment of these establishments is the habitat in which they may or may not be able to blossom and thrive (Oldenburg, 1989, p. 203).

Research design. Based on the literature reviewed, it was expected that sociability within the suburban and the New Urban context may vary and in the two park types, both within the latter urban context. Therefore, researcher utilized a case study format to gauge anticipated “third-place” criteria for sociability within both settings, while also contrasting sociability within the dog park with that of the non-dog park in the latter urban context.

By choosing two parks of the same type with comparable features within two different neighborhoods, the study supports comparability in patterns of social behavior, while illuminating the influence of contextual differences in the neighborhoods, which differ in their density, diversity of use and urban form, as represented in their corresponding rural-to-urban-transect T-Zone classification. Use of the T-Zone as a focal point assists classification and an understanding of such variations, with T-Zone 3 representing a suburban, low density

environment, and T-Zone 4 noting a more diverse and urbanized environment with higher densities and variable land use and setbacks. T-Zone 5, also diverse, includes higher densities, tight street networks, wide sidewalks, steady street tree planting and short setbacks. However, in actuality, T-Zones are not mutually exclusive, and a typical suburban neighborhood (T-Zone 3) may combine portions akin to T-Zone 1 (natural) areas, while a general urban neighborhood (T-Zone 4) may include some portions corresponding to T-Zones 1, 2, or 3.

Case study 1. Case study 1 considers two neighborhoods, which differ in density and mixtures of use. The suburban neighborhood includes Wagging Tail Dog Park, which falls within Suburban T-Zone 3, composed of low-density residential, with deep setbacks, natural plantings and large blocks. On the park's north side is an unspoiled Natural T-Zone 1 area with unique topographic features. A transitional area west of the park and west of T-Zone 3 is a mixed-use General Urban T-Zone 4 area, which continues to and includes the intersection of Keller Springs on both sides of the North Dallas Tollway. T-Zone 4 is composed of mixed-use, multi-level residential, offices and retail amidst a variety of setbacks and medium- to large-sized blocks. Due to surface parking and deep setbacks, which predominate the area, this transitional area is classified as T-Zone 4 and is primarily within the suburban neighborhood. Contrasting this suburban neighborhood context is the New Urban neighborhood where Spruill Dog Park is found within General Urban T-Zone 5. This area is characterized by a tight street network, short setbacks, consistent street trees and integrated parking garages and is composed of higher-density mixed uses, including multi-level residential, offices and ground-floor retail.

Both dog parks are fully enclosed by decorative metal fencing, which separate large and small dogs, and include sanitary bag dispensers, a watering station and paths connecting the off-

leash areas to the surrounding neighborhood. The dog enclosures within the parks are comparable in size, with the two off-leash areas of Spruill Dog Park equaling approximately 60,440 square feet, and the two off-leash areas of Wagging Tail Dog Park, totaling approximately 63,206 square feet. Both include perimeter seating, as well as grouped seating that faces inward and supports users facing each other. Given the two neighborhoods differ in terms of density, mixtures of use and walkability, the comparison offers insight into how contextual differences influence social relations within the parks, given the similarity of the two dog parks in terms of amenities.

Case Study 2. The second case study controls for built environment context in its comparison of social activity within New Urban Spruill Dog Park to a non-dog Bosque Park two blocks to its east, both within the same New Urban Addison neighborhood within T-Zone 5 and sharing common destinations and housing. Both parks include sanitary bag dispensers, are connected by pathways to the surrounding neighborhood, and include both perimeter seating and seating that is grouped to accommodate users facing each other. Since both parks are within the confines of the New Urban community, researcher sought to gain an understanding of dog park culture, by fixing the potential influences of density, walkability and mixtures of use, on the rate, quality, and strength of social interaction.

Figure 2: Aerial photograph showing both neighborhoods.



This aerial photo illustrates the suburban neighborhood within area 1 east of the North Dallas Tollway and the New Urban neighborhood within area 2 along the Tollway's west side.

Data Collection. Researcher sought to inductively cross-check and validate by triangulation, utilizing different forms of data, including observation interviews and a survey of neighborhood friendliness. The diversity of data gathered within the divergent settings, while controlling for the effects of context, adds cogency, and the use of both qualitative and quantitative observation data confirmed through interviews adds to our understanding and through triangulation, supports the validity of the study.

Observations. Six weeks of qualitative observation at the three research sites utilized participant observation to gather field notes on patterns of activity. Observation data was recorded in a semi-structured format using symbols to consistently represent whether park users interacted with each other, including human to dog interaction. Data representing different types of social interaction and third-place activity, included length of use, the presence or absence of informal, lively interaction, spontaneous repeat encounters, inclusivity, and any indications of social leveling. To characterize dog behaviors, semi-structured field notes grouped canines into broad categories, considering the influence of their behavior and human perceptions

about them on human social relations. Researcher sought to record all behavior in an open-ended, comprehensive way so that any patterns of activity could be considered, while allowing themes to emerge freely, revealing relationships between contextual factors and the rate, quality and strength of face-to-face social interaction.

Researcher sought an immersion in the culture of the three parks over six weeks beginning in December of 2018 and continuing through February of 2019. Observations came in two-hour morning, midday and afternoon shifts. To equally represent patterns of activity in each park at various times of day, shifts rotated daily. On days when any park was closed due to precipitation, wet ground or maintenance, researcher moved to the next park in the rotation schedule, making up observation shifts of the closed park at the next available date. Since many people continued to use the parks during times of light rain, researcher observed the parks during these times, including February 9, 2019, when people were observed in Spruill Dog Park during light precipitation. Researcher did not observe the parks during times of heavy rain but continued with the rotation schedule as closely as possible, while working around park closures. See a detailed schedule of researcher’s observations below.

Table 1: Rotating shifts of observations

Morning shift 8:00 am - 11:00 am
 Midday shift 11:30 am - 2:30 pm
 Afternoon 2:30 pm – 5:30 pm

Wagging Tail Dog	Bosque Park	Spruill Dog Park
12-18-18 Morning	12-18-18 Midday	12-18-18 Afternoon
12-19-18 Midday	12-19-18 Morning	12-19-18 Afternoon
12-21-18 Morning	12-21-18 Afternoon	12-20-18 Morning
12-22-18 Midday	12-22-18 Morning	12-21-18 Midday
Closed several days	12-26-18 Midday	12-22-18 Afternoon
12-27-18 Afternoon	12-27-18 Afternoon	12-26-18 Morning
12-28-18 Midday	12-28-18 Morning	12-27-18 Midday
12-29-18 Morning	12-29-18 Afternoon	12-28-18 Closed
1-3-19 Afternoon	1-4-19 Midday	12-29-18 Closed

Wagging Tail Dog	Bosque Park	Spruill Dog Park
1-4-19 Closed	1-5-19 Afternoon	1-4-19 Closed
1-5-19 Closed	1-7-19 Midday	1-5-19 Midday
1-7-19 Closed	1-8-19 Afternoon	1-7-19 Afternoon
1-8-19 Morning	1-9-19 Midday	1-8-19 Midday
1-9-19 Afternoon	1-10-19 Morning	1-9-19 Morning
1-10-19 Midday	1-11-19 Rained	1-10-19 Afternoon
1-11-19 Rained	1-12-19 Afternoon	1-11-19 Rained
1-12-19 Morning	1-15-19 Afternoon	1-12-19 Midday
1-15-19 Midday	1-16-19 Morning	1-15-19 Morning
1-16-19 Afternoon	1-17-19 Afternoon	1-16-19 Midday
1-17-19 Midday	1-18-19 Midday	1-17-19 Morning
1-18-19 Morning	1-19-19 Morning	1-18-19 Afternoon
1-19-19 Afternoon	1-23-19 Morning	1-19-19 Midday
1-23-19 Morning	1-24-19 Morning	1-21-19 Afternoon
1-24-19 Afternoon	1-25-19 Afternoon	1-22-19 Morning
1-25-19 Midday	1-26-19 Morning	1-25-19 Morning
1-26-19 Morning	1-29-19 Afternoon	1-26-19 Afternoon
1-27-19 Afternoon	1-30-19 Midday	1-29-19 Morning
1-29-19 Midday	2-1-19 Afternoon	1-30-19 Afternoon
1-30-19 Morning	2-2-19 Midday	2-1-19 Morning
1-31-19 Afternoon	2-5-19 Morning	2-2-19 Afternoon
2-1-19 Midday	2-6-19 Afternoon	2-5-19 Midday
2-5-19 Afternoon	2-7--19 Midday	2-6-19 Morning
2-7-19 Afternoon	2-8--19 Midday	2-9-19 Midday
2-8-19 Morning	2-9-19 Morning	2-12-19 Morning
2-13-19 Afternoon	2-13-19 Morning	2-14-19 Midday
2-14-19 Morning	2-14-19 Afternoon	2-15-19 Morning
2-15-19 Afternoon	2-15-19 Midday	2-16-19 Afternoon
2-16-19 Midday	2-16-19 Morning	

All observations were conducted with a dog present, as a participating dog park user. Observations were input into extensive field notes represented in MS Word memos to file and summarized in Apple Pages and KeyNote files, which were input into an I-pad. Each shift was represented in a separate file, with pre-arranged symbols for each day imposed over a base photo to represent the number of park users, duration of their visits, dog type and other observations of face-to-face verbal communication within the three parks. Field notes and summaries of these observations can be found in the Appendix.

Dog breed and behavior. A majority of participants were accompanied by one or more dogs. Because there was a diversity of dog types, and to benefit the anonymity of dog owners,

often associated with their dogs, dogs were identified by groups, including sporting, herding, working dogs, hounds, small companion dogs, terriers, pit bulls and mixed breeds. A majority of the sporting dogs in the study are Labradors and golden retrievers, while the herding dogs are made up of shepherds and cattle dogs. Both sporting and herding dogs are considered to be high energy and have tendencies for possessiveness toward their toys. Working dogs observed in the study were mainly Doberman pinchers and rottweilers. They are considered intelligent and require a lot of exercise. Hounds are inquisitive, speedy and independent and include small dogs like dachshunds and beagles and larger hounds, such as dalmatians and Rhodesian ridgebacks. Companion dogs in the study include poodles, Maltese, English bulldogs and shih tzus. They are generally considered people friendly, though some have tendencies to bark frequently. Terriers include Yorkshire terriers and Irish terriers, among others. They are considered well mannered and intelligent generally. Pit bull terriers, often considered aggressive, are categorized separately from other terriers. Bred to chase livestock, pit bulls have high prey tendencies and are not naturally aggressive toward people.

Interviews. The interviews sought data related to third-place activity, including frequency and convenience of use, type of interaction, inclusivity, mixing and leveling. Factors that could influence third-place activity, including perceptions surrounding dogs, dog types and sense of community were also explored during interviews. Each interview sought richly descriptive data, using open-ended questions, free of technical jargon, encouraging participants to share perspectives with no word limits, and encouraging participants to communicate their perspectives with objectives of inclusivity (Flyvbjerg, 2013).

Participants included forty-nine park users chosen from Wagging Tail Dog Park, 42 park users from Bosque Park and 48 park users from Spruill Park. All participants were chosen randomly, with the only qualifications that they be actively using the park and at least 18 years of age. Though not asked to identify themselves by race, participants were multiracial and representative of park users within the two communities. Summaries of their interview responses can be found in the results of interviews section.

Interviews were conducted during February of 2019 at the conclusion of the observation period to avoid interruption of normal park activity during observations. In an attempt to remain detached from participants and to avoid influencing interview responses, the majority of participants wrote in their own responses, with researcher stepping in only when participants needed clarification about the interview questions or needed help filling out the questionnaire due to cold temperatures or hands that were full.

Consent and park user profile. A consent form and brief demographic survey were stapled to the top of the interviews, which were attached to a clipboard with pen and handed to participants. The interviews followed this brief introduction, which gained consent of participants to take part in the interview process. The Park user profile gathered demographic information, including age, marital status, highest level of education, employment and household income.

Interview questions. The following interview questions collected dog-park user data regarding access to the park, park features and social practices in the park to assist an understanding of the respective park cultures.

1. How often do you walk/drive to this park? Why?

- 1b. Does the distance of the park from your home encourage you to walk/drive to the park?
Why/why not?
- 1c. Do certain park features excite, relax or encourage you to walk/drive to this park?
Why/why not?
2. How often do you encounter, wave or speak to the same park users when you come to the park? Why?
- 2a. Are they mostly accompanied by a dog?
- 2b. Does the size and/or breed of the dog encourage or inhibit the interaction that you have with other park users? Why?
- 2c. Does the opportunity of repeated encounters with people you know encourage you to walk/drive to this park? Why?
3. Do you do any of the following with them: Stop and chat at the park; meet up at another location for coffee, entertainment or some other activity; exchange social media or mobile contact information; deliberately visit with other park users? Where?
4. Do you consider yourself to be an introvert or an extrovert? Why?
5. Do you feel a sense of community in this park? Why?
- 5a. Do you feel a sense of community in your neighborhood? Why?
6. Do your conversations with other park users tend to be intimate, emotionally intense, socially supportive, reciprocal, and/or meaningful? In what way?

Survey of neighborhood friendliness. During January and February of 2019, researcher conducted an intercept survey of neighborhood friendliness to determine whether people in each neighborhood were comparably friendly. Walking through the neighborhoods during

daylight hours, researcher said hello to approximately 100 people walking within each neighborhood. Approximately half of the intercept survey time was conducted with researcher accompanied by a dog and half with researcher walking alone. Counting the responses and recording the data on an I-pad shortly after these interactions, researcher noted whether respondents reacted with a friendly greeting, whether they started a conversation with researcher and how many, if any, pets were present with them. When a group of two or more people were greeted, researcher recorded each response separately. A hello response was also recorded when respondents nodded politely. The information from the survey was useful in both assessing the friendliness of people relative to the study and as validation of walkability studies for each neighborhood.

Methods of data analysis. Initial analysis began with a preliminary site study that considered basic patterns of activity, including circulation and transportation methods observed within the two neighborhoods and the three individual sites. After sorting through various field note diagrams and memos related to six weeks of observations of park culture, researcher sought activity patterns that appeared to differ under varying circumstances and neighborhood context.

Guided by Charmaz (2006), initial coding took place during a thorough review of the interviews, where similar and anomalous responses were sorted into categories, then focused using theoretical coding. Researcher considered the diversity of cultures present during observations which might affect or alter interpretation of interview responses. SPSS assisted the analysis by allowing researcher to summarize, organize and present interview data into a comprehensive format, which allowed responses to be viewed together and patterns to emerge which might indicate different aspects or influences of the neighborhoods and parks.

Researcher sorted and grouped similar observations based on the data's internal logistics, while comparing observations with any data that emerged from surveys or interview responses, which might support or confirm the observations. Researcher categorized this data into that which is physical vs. social and sought patterns of activity which might support or hinder expected third-place interaction, utilizing a checklist of expected third place social behaviors to assist interpretation of the data. Contrasting data from the suburban with that of the urban neighborhood and comparing data from the dog-parks and the nondog park, researcher observed unfolding themes indicative of the variety of influences present in the neighborhoods.

Background of researcher. Having three dogs myself, I've spent considerable time in different dog parks and walking through a variety of neighborhoods accompanied by dogs. With many happy experiences and a few negative ones associated with aggressive dogs, I've grown particularly appreciative of dog-supportive spaces, though somewhat fearful of certain types of dogs. Living in multi-family housing most of my adult life and having traveled in Europe, I bring a certain amount of experience with medium density living. Though living in apartments near Wagging Tail Dog Park and using the park regularly a number of years ago, I never came to appreciate dog park culture the way I have since conducting this research. Being an owner of large dogs, the majority of observation time was spent in the enclosures designated for large dogs.

Though previous study of the physical and psychological effects of air pollution have supported my appreciation for the efficiency of Smart Growth, Transit Oriented Development and some forms of New Urbanism, living in an inner-ring suburb over the past several years, I have seen the ease of caring for and exercising pets given a suburban backyard. And though my

pets and I have grown settled and somewhat satisfied leaving walks in the park out of our lives, we've also grown frustrated trying to function efficiently in a place where every day needs are scattered, especially when it comes to dog supportive spaces. I'd like to believe I can appreciate the best of both a modern suburban world and the very different world of New Urbanism. More recently, suburbia has come to hold a special place in my heart, and its privacy and wider spaces have become an essential part of my existence.

Given my varied life experiences and that an extant literature review was undertaken before designing the study, I realize my background may assist an understanding of the data to some degree, but that it may also bring some bias. Nevertheless, I will persevere, while making every effort to ensure objectivity so that the data can unfold on its own and speak for itself in the clearest and truest way possible.

Chapter 4: The settings, park and neighborhood analyses

This chapter briefly introduces the reader to the setting where the research takes place, first briefly introducing the two neighborhoods and the three parks. A site analysis of each park follows, demonstrating observed patterns of activity surrounding subtle differences in park infrastructure. A narrative analyzing each neighborhood, classified according to T-Zones, then describes patterns of activity and characteristics of the neighborhoods surrounding the parks. The chapter concludes with a summary and conclusions, which assists an understanding of contextual influences that might affect the social interaction under study.

The settings. About fifteen minutes north of downtown Dallas along the North Dallas Tollway lies a suburban neighborhood, which like many in North Dallas, is somewhat homogenous, with low-density homes dominating the area. The neighborhood, primarily classified as T-Zone 3 includes single-family detached homes, with a few low- to mid-rise office and apartment buildings scattered throughout the area. Keller Springs, a four-lane, divided thoroughfare, runs through the neighborhood, dividing the garden apartments south of Keller Springs to Arapaho in T-Zone 4 from the elite gated communities on the north side of Keller Springs (T-Zone 3). Drive-up retail, restaurants and offices dominate the area east of these residential areas in an area designated T-Zone 4 along the North Dallas Tollway at Keller Springs. South at The Clubs at Prestonwood, people gather at the golf course and tennis courts within Suburban T-Zone 3. Other visible activity in the disjointed but attractive community can be found within the 6.9 acres of land that make up Wagging Tail Dog Park at 5841 Keller Springs in Dallas.

Figure 3: Suburban neighborhood T-Zones



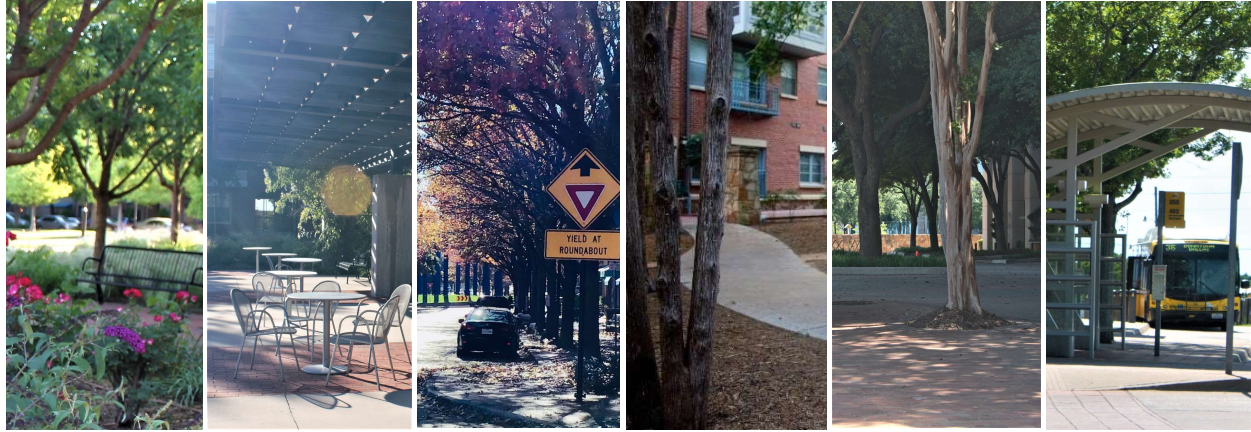
The first photo above shows a view of White Rock Creek from Wagging Tail Dog Park, followed by a residential roadway north of the park, a snapshot of gated homes on the park's east side, followed by two photos of area retail on the east side of the North Dallas Tollway, and high-rise apartments at its intersection with Keller Springs.

On the opposite side of the North Dallas Tollway in T-Zone 5, the roundabout at Addison Circle calms four lanes of traffic within T-Zone 5, and a heavy canopy of live oaks cool narrow streets as people walk casually along shaded sidewalks, moving in and out of apartment homes and restaurants. Mid-rise offices north at Keller Springs and the North Dallas Tollway within transitional T-Zone 4 are divided from New Urban apartment homes to the south by vacant land and large parking areas, while a more integrated area with continuous street walls south along the tollway are more consistent with the residential towers and ground floor retail that line Addison Circle within T-Zone 5. Despite a twenty-minute trip from some homes, people walk casually and pass along red brick crosswalks with canines to reach Spruill Park at 4925 Marcus Avenue.

This neighborhood is scattered with parks and open space, including the 1.85-acre Spruill Park, which gives apartment dwellers a common patio, flower garden and dog park, as a break from the apartment homes, which dominate the area. Two blocks to the southeast of Spruill Park is Bosque Park, which is a forest-like space just under one acre enclosing 200 natural trees saved prior to the neighborhood's development. Bosque Park is a traditional non-dog park,

which fronts Quorum Drive at the intersection of Morris Avenue across from the patio seating at Astoria Caffe. Walkways surrounding the park support residents of the apartment homes which contain the park on all four sides.

Figure 4: New Urban neighborhood T-zones



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First two photos show the Earth-kind garden and plaza within Spruill Park, followed by a tree-lined street near Spruill, interior pathway within Bosque Park, the exterior of high-rise offices along the west side of the North Dallas Tollway and a snapshot of a DART station on the neighborhood's south side.

New Urban dog park analysis. Spruill Park at 4936 Marcus Avenue is a multifunctional 1.85-acre park between Marcus Avenue on the north, Goodman Avenue on the south, Artist Way on the west and Ringo Avenue on the park's east side. Sidewalks which line the perimeter of the park and a promenade, which dissects the 1.85-acre park, supports walking and interaction amongst users of different segments of this multi-functional park space. The two off-leash areas in the southeast portion of the park are a focal point for this study. A promenade running east to west through the space passes alongside a large grassy area along the dog park's western edge and connects to a paved hardscape pavilion and Earthkind garden on the north side of the park. The promenade connects all these park segments, and due to its proximity near seating areas, supports communication between different areas of the park. In a similar way, the fences that

surround the two off-leash areas form a common border between the two off-leash areas, and due to this common boundary, support interaction between play areas on either side.

Figure 5: Spruill Dog Park aerial photo. Source: Google Earth



Within the dog enclosures, seating areas are of similar emphasis and do not appear to encourage use of one seating area over the other. This gives the park a sense of openness, which supports privacy and solitude during times of low occupancy and

contributes to a diminished sense of order in the park. A slightly more concentrated seating area located front and center of the large dog enclosure accommodates park users facing each other and gives acquaintances a convenient place to talk. Seating is inadequate to allow everyone a place to sit when the dog park is full, and park users commonly stand during hours of higher occupancy.

The public park provides a socially neutral ground, where people of different ages and socioeconomic classifications can come together repeatedly throughout the day and into the evening. Yet policies within the surrounding multi-family community which do not restrict dogs by breed may limit park neutrality by supporting a presence of aggressive breeds within the park.

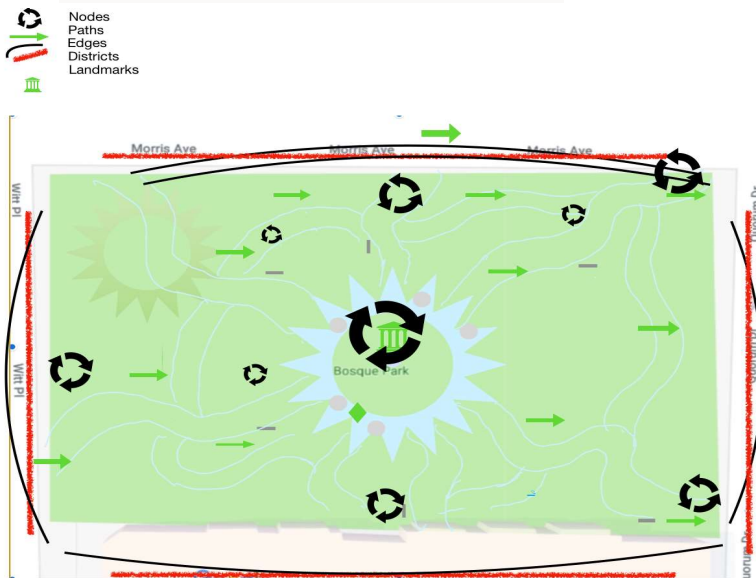
Figure 6: Bosque Park Aerial Photo

Source: Google Earth



New Urban non-dog park analysis. Bosque Park at 15675 Quorum Drive in Addison, Texas is a traditional urban park located between Quorum Drive on the east, Morris Avenue on the north, and Witt Place on the park's west side. Sidewalks in Addison Circle feed directly into concrete paths, which connect with secondary gravel paths within .85-acre Bosque Park. The combination of concrete and gravel pathways and mulch as a ground cover work together to support an organized, natural block of urban space cooled by a heavy canopy of trees saved prior to development of the neighborhood. Sidewalks and walkways surrounding the park divide it from the surrounding residential and retail districts that the park supports. These paths combine with park walkways, which wind through the park and ultimately converge around a central fountain, which forms a central node of activity where pedestrians can connect. A promenade assists the movement of people between the park and the adjacent apartment building and retail on the park's south side. A driveway borders the park to the east, providing access to a parking garage, where some apartment dwellers can leave their cars. On-street parking along the edge of the park also support apartment dwellers. Together these parking areas set paths for automobiles, while supporting pedestrian traffic in motion throughout the park and the surrounding neighborhood.

Figure 7: Site Analysis Bosque Park.



Minor nodes of activity converge where pedestrian paths meet park benches, including a common meeting spot directly across Morris Avenue, where pedestrians can cross to Astoria Caffe and Wine Bar. While a minority of seating

is metal and fixed to the ground, adding to stability and security, much of the park seating is flexible, with movable chairs and tables that allow users to rearrange the furniture for privacy or to support small community gatherings. The public park provides a socially neutral ground, where people of different ages and socioeconomic classifications can come together repeatedly throughout the day and into the evening. Yet policies within the surrounding multi-family community which do not restrict dogs by breed may limit park neutrality by supporting a presence of aggressive breeds.

Suburban dog park analysis. A pivotal point for social activity in the neighborhood is within the off-leash areas of the 6.9-acre Wagging Tail Dog Park at 5841 Keller Springs Road, Dallas, Texas 75248. The public space provides a socially neutral ground, where people of different ages and socioeconomic classifications come together repeatedly throughout the day. Activity is centered within the semi-circular seating area toward the center of the large dog off-leash area. Because there is one main seating area central and much larger than other seating

areas, park users are naturally directed to this area, making it easy for them to potentially decide to sit near other park users.

Figure 8: Aerial photo grouping, Wagging Tail Dog Park.



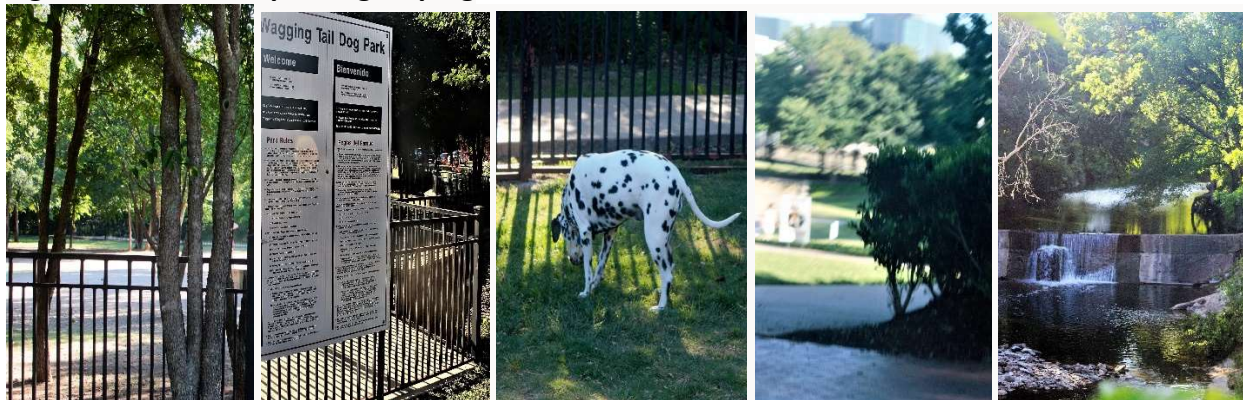
Aerial photo showing pathways and a detail of central seating within the large-dog supportive space.

Like a foyer, this central seating welcomes guests and brings them together, and by steering them to this dominant area, which is concrete and immovable, the space establishes an underlying sense of security and order. The open area directly across from this central seating area, shown in the first photograph below is used to interact with and react to active canines, where users can throw balls to their pets and communicate with other park users about their dogs' performances. Secondary nodes of activity include the westernmost seating area. When the park is not full, this area provides privacy for users desiring solitude or for those meeting or accompanying others.

The entrance to the off-leash areas is also secondary, where paths cross as people enter and exit the park. Because the entrance area is transitional and because its users tend to be heading toward a destination, social activity may be characterized by casual greetings and shorter conversations. Other secondary activity is supported on paved paths exterior to the off-leash areas, shown above, which by supporting enjoyment of the natural green space and creek,

increase the desirability of the park as a destination. However, these paths remain primarily supportive of physical activity and only minor nodes for social activity within the park itself, as they fail to stimulate significant social or physical activity out in the community. Perhaps due to a lack of nearby seating, these paths tend to be focused on exercise, a destination-oriented activity. While foot traffic associated with the central parking lot stimulates minor levels of social activity along the path, the spatial separation between the walkway and the large-dog central seating area hinders communication between walkers and large dog owners.

Figure 9: Suburban photo grouping



Photos show open run area, posted rules, two photos showing exterior paths, followed by a photo of White Rock Creek.

Though the narrower size and shape of the small dog park on the east side of the central parking lot is somewhat more accommodating to communication between walkers who look onto this off-leash area, the strength of these exterior paths tend toward physical activity and restoration. And though dramatic views of White Rock Creek, as shown above, and other park features create an inviting walk along the park's internal pathways, low numbers of neighborhood pedestrians outside Wagging Tail Park attest to poor neighborhood walkability.

Suburban neighborhood analysis. The park sets within a homogenous, low-density residential area (T-Zone 3) with several garden office buildings scattered throughout the area

along the north side of Keller Springs. Apartment homes south of the roadway in T-Zone 4 dominate the area south of the park. At the North Dallas Tollway along Knoll Trail near Keller Springs, strip centers, restaurants and retail support mid- to high-rise office buildings and higher levels of traffic east of the North Dallas Tollway within T-Zone 4. The suburban neighborhood extends to Preston Road on the east, the North Dallas Tollway to the west, Arapaho Road to the south, and Westgrove Road to the north.

Figure 10: Suburban neighborhood T-Zones.



Photos show White Rock Creek, the tennis courts at Prestonwood Clubs, the retail along the North Dallas Tollway, followed by mixed-use residential and offices in the same area, while the last two photos show residential just north of Wagging Tail.

Though retail and restaurants dot the northeast corner of Keller Springs and the North Dallas Tollway within T-Zone 4, honking horns and auto exhaust dominate the intersection, and few people can be seen walking or even crossing the street to reach the high-rise apartments on the southeast corner. Here, residential densities and mixtures of use are more than adequate to support pedestrian flows if the street scene were only more walkable. However, since street frontage in this area is dominated by deep setbacks and large parking lots, the area does not support such flows. As witnessed during observations and confirmed during a survey of neighborhood friendliness, with a scarcity of people walking in the neighborhood, the vast

majority of shoppers drive in and park directly in front of strip centers to access retail and destinations throughout the neighborhood.

Figure 11: Suburban photo grouping.



Photos show a typical automobile-oriented suburban setting with lack of planted buffers along sidewalks, auto-oriented entrance ramp to Keller Springs, strip retail, close by medium-density multi-family, and high-rise multi-family within T-Zone 4.

Like apartment communities along the south side of Keller Springs within T-Zone 4, the up-scale T-Zone 3 residential area north of the park is somewhat active with people walking and riding bikes, yet the residential areas are detached from the park by long stretches of vacant land and spatial gaps due to low densities, which inhibit comfortable walking within T-Zone 3.

Figure 12: Photograph of typical suburban street.

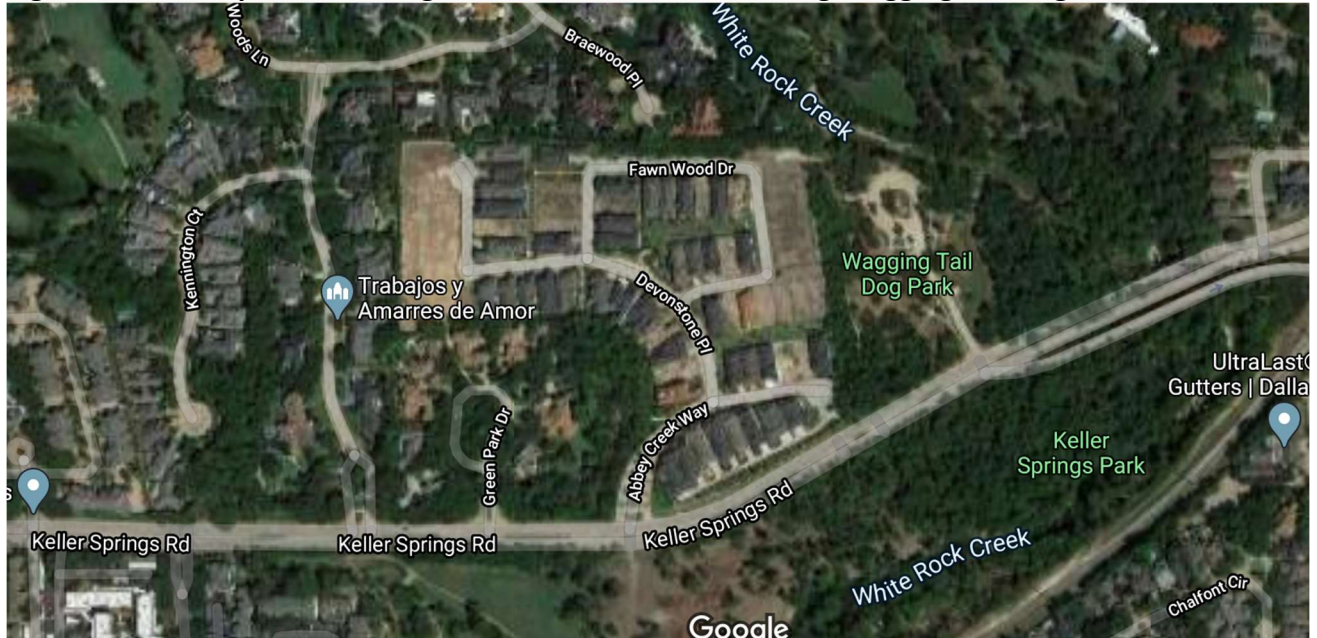


Photo shows low-density residential (T-Zone 3) just west of Wagging Tail Dog Park.

Despite that trees line the four-lane divided roadway and that park walkways connect directly to it, the sidewalk's juxtaposition along Keller Springs, with no planted buffer, may also discourage walking to neighborhood destinations within T-Zone 4. Even more intimidating,

entrance ramps to the Preston Road bridge are dominated by moving cars, which create a hazard to pedestrians and strongly discourage pedestrian travel to offices within T-Zone 3.

Figure 13: Aerial photo showing residential areas surrounding Wagging Tail Dog Park.



Aerial photo showing low-density residential homes west of Wagging Tail Dog Park. Source: Google Earth.

Figure 14: Aerial of neighborhood surrounding Spruill Park.



Aerial image of New Urban Addison Circle, showing Bosque Park central to the photo.

Source: Google Earth

New Urban neighborhood analysis. Walkways wind through the New Urban neighborhood connecting apartment residents and workers to restaurants, bars, small grocers, hair salons, dry cleaners and other neighborhood services within New Urban T- Zone 5. Office

Figure 15: Photograph of typical New Urban street.



Photo above demonstrates apartments viewable from the east side of Spruill Dog Park within the New Urban neighborhood.

Towers along the North Dallas Tollway create a transition along the highway and buffer multi-family residences from the noise of tollway traffic.

Figure 16: New Urban T- Zone 5 photo grouping.

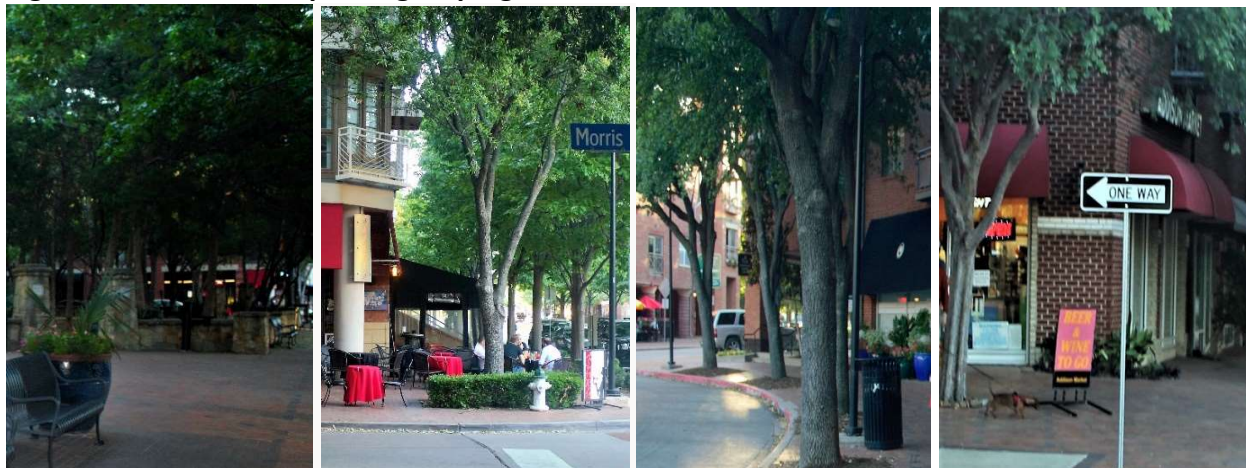


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Photos show west fence-line of Spruill Dog Park, a photo of mixed-use with retail along the south side of Addison Circle, followed by three photos of office towers along the North Dallas Tollway, and a photo of a DART bus station.

Exercise classes and events happening three blocks south of Spruill Park in Addison Circle Park support an active atmosphere within T-Zone 5. A shady, urban Bosque Park two blocks to the southeast of Spruill Park encourages walking and supports apartment dwellers' needs for open space. By supplementing the beauty of a walk through the neighborhood with natural features, the location of a variety of open spaces scattered throughout T-Zone 5 support walking and exercising pets, especially since most businesses allow dogs to accompany guests onto patios. Similarly, the narrow and safe streets that wind through the residential areas are shaded by live oaks, which provide shade and soften the blow of passing cars, while calmly supporting human interaction. These features work together with the location of retail destinations within T-Zone 5 at ground level to support convenient accessibility and street activity. Because the entrances to these establishments are within close proximity of each other, they support walking, common use, and repeat encounters, given the high number of opportunities within a short distance. Finally, because the storefront doorways are located along the sidewalk and near the street, they invite people to approach them on foot.

Figure 17: New Urban photo grouping.



Photos showing exterior of Bosque Park, photo of Astoria Café across Morris Street, a snapshot of apartments along Addison Circle, followed by a photo of retail along Addison Circle.

Site analysis conclusions. Similar to Bosque Park, with its combination of gravel and mulch as ground cover, patchy grass at Spruill and nonexistent grass at Wagging Tail, delivers an unpretentious, low-key feel for these parks, as characteristic of the third place. Though the placement of seating is important to social interaction to the extent that it brings people within close proximity of one other. Seating surrounding the park's central fountain supports flexibility and communication between a diversity of users. Seating within the park is also potentially influential where it intersects with paths and encourages casual, potentially short communications between those seated and those walking dogs. Yet singular park benches along park paths tend to support a more independent communication between people together in pairs or meeting in the park. These smaller seating areas tend to support engagement consistent with "bring your own friends" establishments, as described by Oldenburg (1989), which can attract transients, making the setting incidental and uncharacteristic of the third place.

By enclosing the dogs within separate off-leash areas, fences within each dog park support relaxation for park users by allowing dogs to exercise off-leash, enclosed within secure areas amongst dogs of similar sizes. Fences, which separate dog types and direct park activities, also create nodes where fence lines intersect with paths and other lines of activity. At Spruill Dog Park, fences support communication between people within the dog enclosures for dogs of different sizes. Infrastructure meant to separate, therefore, stimulates interaction, allowing a diversity of park users to come together and engage in conversation. Because the two off-leash areas at Wagging Tail Dog Park are separated by a parking lot, however, its design does not support interaction between owners of different sized dogs, as is the case with Spruill Dog Park.

Seating options within Spruill Dog Park are decentralized. Benches placed along the park perimeter facing inward allow park users to watch dogs as they play. Seating may provide some comfort akin to that of home and support longer stays, while influencing interaction by directing people within a comfortable distance for talking. The one large, inward-facing seating area on the park's south side is not heavily used during off hours when park users who are unfamiliar with people in the park can potentially gravitate to private areas. By opening up options for those who choose to sit alone, Spruill Park seating may cause some users to appear less sociable, resulting in subtle suppressive effects on interaction. However, park connections to the surrounding area integrate the park with the surrounding neighborhood, supporting interaction between park users and people out walking in the residential areas surrounding the park.

Central seating at Suburban Wagging Tail steers a variety of people close to one other and concentrates conversations within earshot of a number of people, supporting opportunities to connect with a variety of users (Oldenburg, 1989). By steering a diversity of people near one another, the more central semi-circular seating area of Wagging Tail can bring diverse users within a comfortable talking distance, supporting potential conversation and leveling. People facing each other within structured seating at Wagging Tail, however, can fall into casual conversation where common interests emerge. Conversely, Spruill decentralized seating is influential in dispersing conversation. Activity is not heavily driven by micro-scale design elements. The openness of the park allows groups to form in open areas or near seating, pets, people and regulars.

During late afternoons when the parks achieve their highest capacity, seating does not fully support the high numbers of park users, and people commonly stand relatively close

together. The close proximity of users during this timeframe supports conversation between a diversity of people in the parks. Similarly, an absence of fencing or separation within Bosque Park, supports interaction between a diversity of park users. Yet lacking the fencing to support dogs off-leash, Bosque Park supports generally short park visits. The park's high level of integration and connectivity to the neighborhood supports interaction between park users and people in the community.

Chapter 5: Analysis of observations.

This chapter assimilates field note data recorded during six weeks of observations while seeking an understanding of dog park culture. It then synthesizes this data into a narrative, which explains the activity observed in the three parks. The chapter begins by narrating the observations of New Urban non-dog Bosque Park, then describing observed activity within the two dog parks, supplemented with photographic images of the parks and typical users. Because observed behavior and activity patterns have strong similarities within the two dog parks, this narrative uses those similarities to tell the story, while emphasizing the differences between the two dog parks. A summary of the chapter and conclusions follow, which ties the narrative describing the dog parks to that of the non-dog park and guides an understanding of their interrelationships and influences.

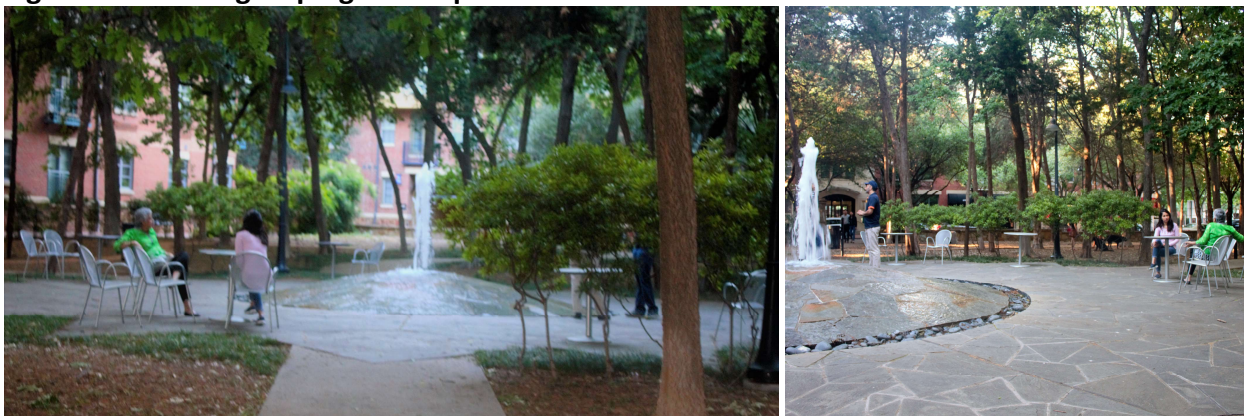
Observations of the non-dog park. The picture of Bosque Park is serene. Saturated with over 200 trees within slightly less than an acre, the wooded park space appears to attract not only humans from the surrounding apartments, retail and offices but also squirrels, which in turn attract dogs and more humans. Many use Bosque Park as a place to relieve pets, but it is not a dog park and is only partially enclosed by the waist-high stone fence that buffers it from the quiet roads that surround it. Though most people appear to follow the rule of leashing their dogs when using the park, a few pet owners were observed freeing them to chase squirrels and wander through the concrete and gravel pathways that wind through the park. This includes one man who allows his hound to drag him along at an aerobic pace to chase squirrels, which he does willingly, as if the pursuit could be part of an exercise routine.

While observing Bosque Park, one can sense a rhythm, as people walk outdoors every so often to relieve pets, have a smoke, place a call or cross through on their way to another destination. Different types of walking affect their interaction. Those walking briskly may exhibit body language indicating they are heading toward a different destination or are otherwise in a hurry. Others enjoying the scenery, relax and stop and say hello every so often. The typical Bosque Park user, however, appears fairly rushed, uninterested in lingering or socializing and finishing the trip in less than ten minutes. They walk briskly accompanied by a small companion dog without appearing to notice the trees. This may indicate why aside from providing a sunny spot to relax, seating in Bosque Park often goes unused. After seeing that their pets are relieved and sometimes placing a quick call while waiting, the typical Bosque user will hurry off and return to an apparently busy life. Though people accompanied by either a dog, a child or another adult were observed as more likely to stroll and communicate, the typical Bosque user comes alone and walks briskly through the park as a matter of routine. When communication occurs, it is usually cursory, involving a typical dog lover seated on a park bench, who speaks to a dog walker in passing while referencing the pet, a phenomenon observed repeatedly where paths coincide with seating. Though occasional friends may find a table for a quick bite, and regulars may fall into conversation, with trip duration less than ten minutes, as a general rule, people tend not to cross paths or communicate with other Bosque Park users.

Mid-morning and early afternoon observations tell a slightly different story when people seem in less of a hurry. This is especially true during warmer temperatures when some may find a sunny spot and read awhile. During these off hours, a slower rhythm dominates as regulars seek solitude, as couples stroll at an easy pace and people dawdle in the park a little longer. Men

and women push baby carriages and linger near the fountain, experiencing the rushing of water. On rare occasions, older children were observed, including a group who splashed each other and played along the park's border wall. During this time, the typical seeker of solitude takes it all in, feeling the sun on their skin, noticing birds and nature, settling in for some alone time. Though fewer people are in the park during the slower hours, trip length was sometimes observed as longer during this time, potentially allowing more time for encounters with neighbors.

Figure 18. Photo grouping of Bosque Park.



Photographs showing park interaction occurring during slower park hours.

Observations of the dog parks. Early mornings are sparse at the two dog parks, revealing a phenomenon unlike Bosque Park, which is dominated by quick trips to relieve pets before heading off to work. Though a few New Urban dog park users were observed relieving pets quickly, the vast majority of visits were over 20 minutes at each dog park. In the New Urban dog park, surrounded by five-story apartment buildings, street trees soften quiet streets and relay a sense of calm over the block that makes up the park. Suburban Wagging Tail is also quiet at this hour, where a mist rising off the creek blankets the natural wooded area. With too few people to converse within the separate dog enclosures at either park, small- and large-dog owners were sometimes observed mixing company in order to exchange a little banter. This happens at suburban Wagging Tail, though less frequently due to the isolation of the two off-leash areas,

which flank a central parking lot. A similar mixing of company occurs when the occasional user brings in an aggressive dog, resulting in owners and dogs, both big and small, fleeing to whichever off-leash area is unoccupied by aggressive dogs and greeting park occupants there.

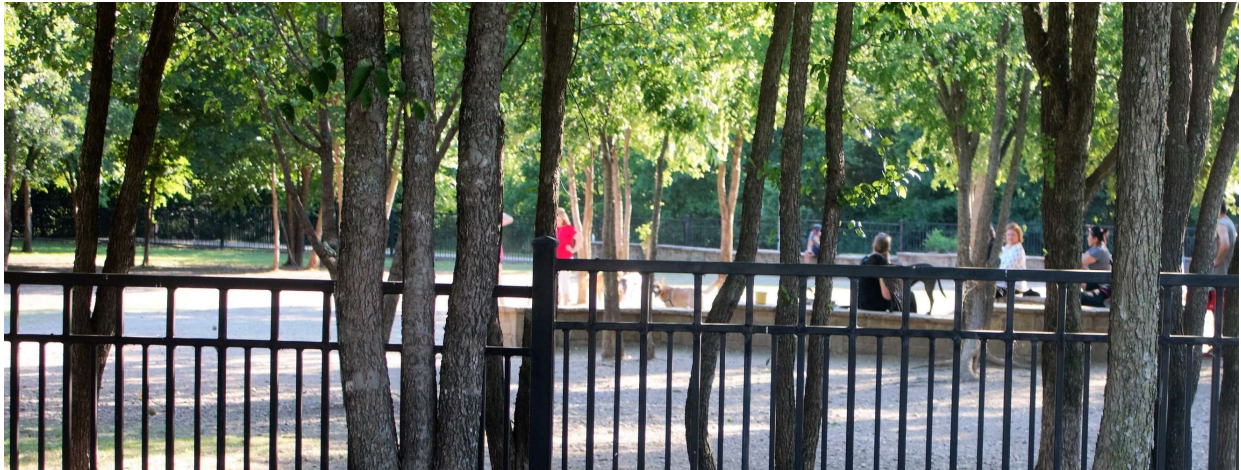
Figure 19. Photograph of Wagging Tail Dog Park.



Above photograph shows small-dog enclosure of Wagging Tail

Md-morning and middays at New Urban Spruill are dominated by the steady rhythm of people throwing balls to their dogs. Because working and herding dogs tend to be high energy, their owners can be found playing fetch for long periods of time. The typical afternoon ball thrower mixes with like minds near the western and southernmost seating areas. Seen in the park for long stretches of daylight, afternoon regulars are dedicated park users, devoted to their dogs and to keeping them exercised. A small number were observed watching the dogs of others, and one professed to pet sitting for other ball throwers who live nearby. Retrievers and other dogs that like to play fetch are prevalent at both dog parks, and because herding dogs tend to obsess over their toys, minor conflicts were occasionally witnessed.

Figure 20. Photograph of Wagging Tail Dog Park.



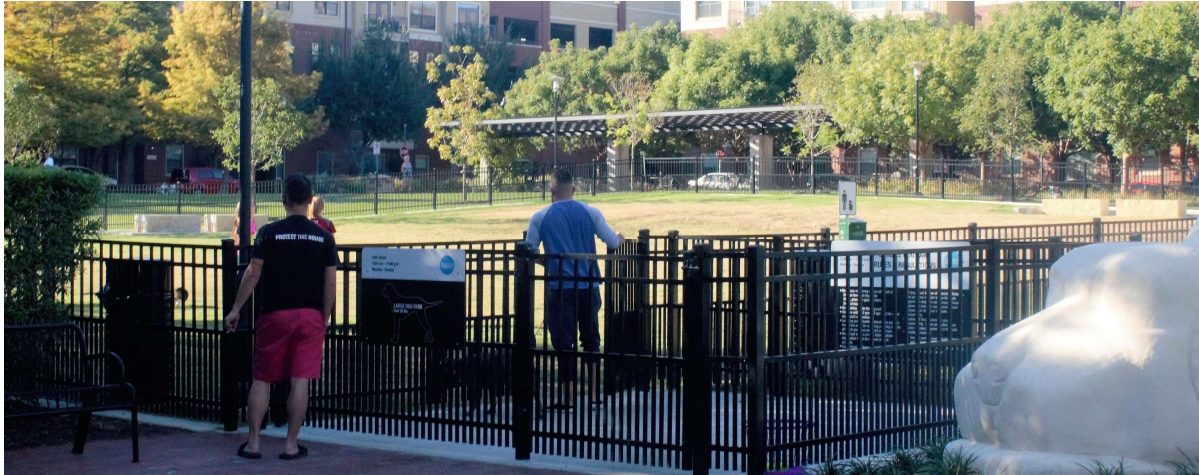
Photograph showing open area to the left of seating where park users throw balls to dogs.

Typical ball throwers tend to stand in an open area south of the central seating at Wagging Tail, as shown above, and though these dog owners are more spread out than those seated, the dogs manage to spark light conversation between them. Though often found sitting alone when park use is low and sometimes turning to devices for other entertainment, the typical ball thrower appears somewhat friendly and open to conversation.

Fences. Alongside the northern fence line enclosing New Urban Spruill Dog Park one early morning, a woman strolled along a walkway with a companion dog. When the two reached the small-dog enclosure, the canine began to hover near the fence, determined to remain there. The location of the fence and the dog, drawn by curiosity to the small dogs inside, brought the woman into contact with two other women inside the fence, and the three began to talk, continuing into an involved conversation lasting over ten minutes. A similar scenario occurs near the park's southern entrance, as users lean and talk over a fence that separates the small and large dog areas. As big dogs trot back and forth along the fence line, barking at the smaller dogs on the other side, humans hover near the dogs, watching, talking and laughing over the boundary between them. It is a common phenomenon for users to lean into a bordering area between

park segments within the New Urban dog park. The fences in this park appear to act in concert with the dogs' actions to connect park users and support interaction.

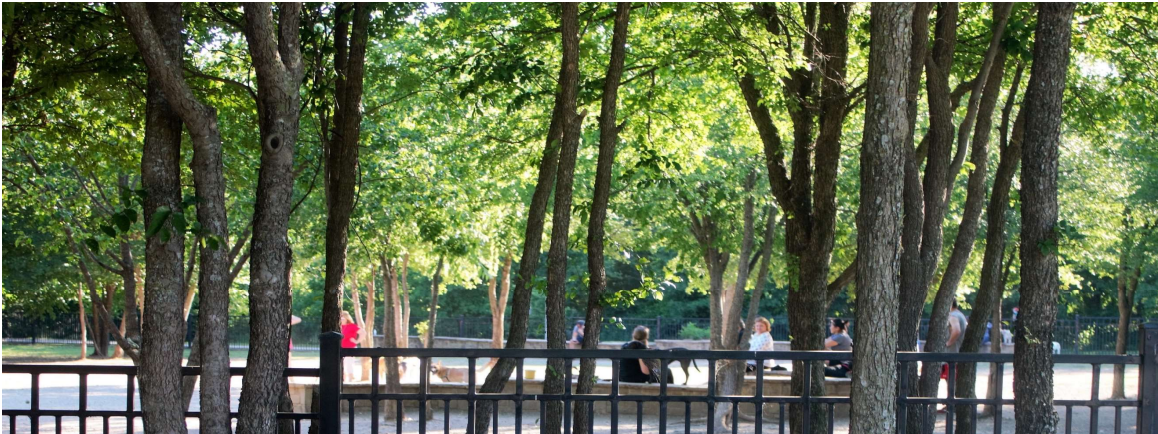
Figure 21. Photograph of Spruill Dog Park.



Photograph shows fence line dividing the large and small dog off-leash areas.

A completely different phenomenon occurs at a less-connected suburban Wagging Tail, as people walk dogs along a path surrounding the off-leash areas, provoking the dogs within to bark loudly. In this case, the dogs' behavior does not provoke conversation because park users, huddled around a central seating area, are too distant from the perimeter walkway to support conversation. Such barking does not appear to disrupt social interaction within the enclosures, however, since dog park users were repeatedly observed continuing to talk despite the dogs' incessant barking. Though in the case of one Wagging Tail regular, whose hound barks constantly, as if tugging on the man's shirt sleeve, most users don't seem to mind, as the man is constantly engaged in conversation with other regulars.

Figure 22. Photograph of Wagging Tail Dog Park.



Photograph showing central seating at Wagging Tail Dog Park.

Seating. People naturally flow to the central seating at Wagging Tail, which brings them into close quarters with other park users. Though many do not appear to know each other, some newcomers were observed getting caught up into the conversations of regulars or drifting into light conversation with those who happen to be sitting beside them. Conversely, in Spruill Dog Park, where seating is spread more evenly throughout the park, with multiple options for solitude, park users don't tend to flock to the more concentrated seating on the southern side but often sit alone in more private areas when unoccupied.

Figure 23. Photograph of Spruill Dog Park.



Photograph showing dispersed seating spread throughout New Urban Spruill Dog Park.

Personal schedules. Though the parks are restricted only to daylight hours, users were observed coming and going throughout the day, dropping in freely, with minimal amounts of

scheduled activity. Mid-day users trickled in, while higher numbers were observed on a more routine basis after 4pm, toward the end of the typical workday.

Figure 24. Photograph of Spruill Dog Park.



Photograph shows people talking late afternoon at Spruill Dog Park.

The higher numbers increased repeat encounters between those with similar schedules, as witnessed in increased verbal communication in each dog park late in the day. In the evening hours, seating became less important, and as numbers increased, so did conversations, as each park filled up with people and canines. At Spruill Park, small groups were observed forming near the park's entrance and progressing to other areas in pairs, growing in number and group size as the day wore on. As a daily ritual, by five, a large group of typical after-five third-place regulars gather on the north side of New Urban Spruill Park around those seated along the north fence, many dressed casually, yet some still in work clothes. Though an occasional user may interact with his cellphone or rush in for a quick trip in heels, the vast majority remain over ten minutes and appear comfortable in the active atmosphere. By five, with less room to spread out, both dog parks take on the character of third place, as people, now standing near enough to talk, mix

together, even in remote areas of the park, not excluding those in active games of fetch, who manage to keep light conversation, while remaining focused on the game.

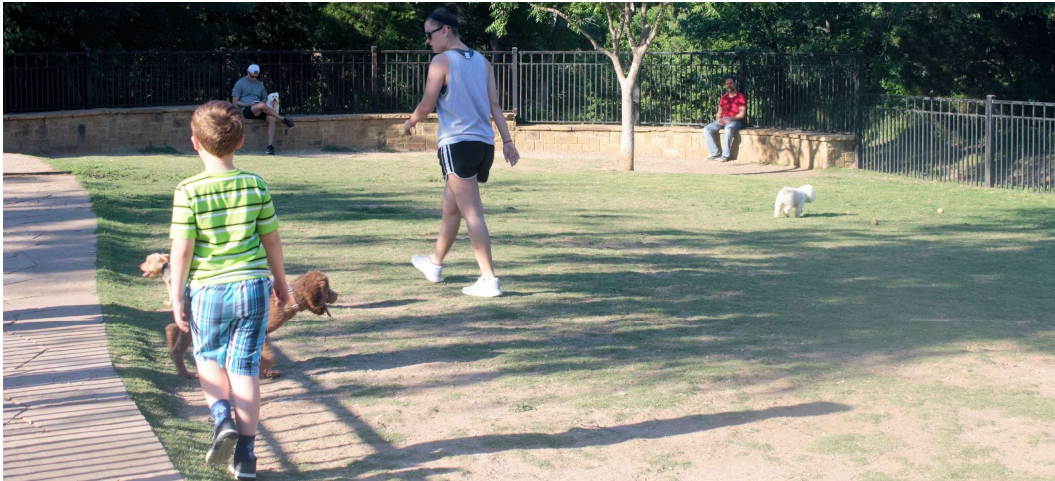
Figure 25. Photograph of Wagging Tail Dog Park.



Photograph shows woman on cellphone in the small-dog enclosure at Wagging Tail.

Recognition and regulars. As typical after-five regulars arrive in each dog park, they appear genuinely happy to see each other, calling each other by name, and congregating in groups that clique. Recognition is most obvious through the use of dog names, though people names are also used, as regulars at both dog parks catch up on events and continue unfinished dialogues. Typical after-five regulars tend to show up late in the day at each park, gathering with a large group at the north edge of Spruill and in smaller groups near the central seating at Wagging Tail. These regulars stand out in a crowd, and in the tradition of third place “*gemutlichkeit*” (Oldenburg, 1989), some of the regulars appear cognizant of newcomers and moderate users, and by speaking loudly, will subtly welcome others into conversation.

Figure 26. Photograph of Wagging Tail Dog Park.



Photograph of family at Wagging Tail Dog Park on weekend.

Cultural groups and families. Though occurring less often, and usually on weekends, families were sometimes observed using suburban Wagging Tail. In stays extending sometimes over an hour, the majority of time was spent together as a familial group, while mixing with others less often than those who were single. On rare occasions, pairs of female friends and ethnically distinctive users huddled in groups away from others, yet people generally welcomed diversity, as men and women often mixed company, and regulars ushered in those of different ages and backgrounds.

Figure 27. Photograph of Spruill Dog Park.



Photograph showing dogs interacting with people at Spruill Dog Park.

A dog's presence. Those who didn't speak or appear to recognize others in their immediate area were sometimes observed as stimulated into conversation, as dogs jumped in and out of seating, attracting attention. Dogs were repeatedly observed as an object of attention that brought users together. At Wagging Tail, a group of poodle owners were observed, apparently drawn together by their dogs' breed, and a new dog owner was observed receiving assistance with training and advice from owners of similar dogs. Dogs were sometimes observed catching the attention of friends or acquaintances, helping owners to find each other, and drawing them near to those who remember dog names yet not always people names. In this function, dogs served as markers or extensions of their owners based on the dog's presence. People associated other users with these dogs and tended to know more dogs by name than people, sometimes recognizing a dog or certain breed first, then searching excitedly for the dog's owner. In this way and others, dogs were observed functioning as a third-place regular, bringing people together and encouraging conversation. People were observed speaking casually to each other, while some bonded by helping each other with dog training. In the absence of dogs to break the ice, people facing each other were observed as influenced by seating, striking up conversations that sometimes developed in intensity. Conversations were also observed as being instigated by negative behaviors, such as dogs getting into fights or stealing toys.

The test of weather. Rain was observed as having an innocuous effect in all three parks. Though Bosque Park users dedicatedly relieved pets in the midst of rainy weather, their pace tended to quicken as temperatures dropped to extreme lows. At Spruill Park, small groups stood and talked in the rain, a few arriving as it began to sprinkle, seemingly unaffected, only to leave when it began to pour. In one case, the rain seemed to elevate mood, encouraging hugging and

playful interfaces amongst a small group of characters, who remained in Spruill Dog Park after the rain began. Though the wind gained momentum in the open spaces, temperatures had to drop to the 20s before park use fell significantly, and even then, several faithful users showed up. One male user of the New Urban Park sat in the heat of his car as his two dogs, unbothered, played and in some cases, appeared invigorated by the cold. While small groups at Wagging Tail became so embroiled in conversation that they either didn't notice or refused to allow the cold to interfere with their conversations, one female group straggled in, faithfully making an appearance at dusk, huddling together closely, as if biting back the cold.

Park etiquette. Several park users were observed going out of their way to be polite, such as those who took it upon themselves to fill and place water bowls in a less out-of-the-way location near central seating to serve all the Wagging Tail canines. Admirably, no one was observed complaining when bowls went unfilled, and though the majority of users were cognizant of the need to pick up after their pets, some found occasion to politely point out when a dog's relief had gone unnoticed. People appeared to take such advice lightly, as no disagreements related to this were observed. In fact, very few conflicts appeared at either park, other than the occasional scuffle amongst the dogs themselves. For example, a few Spruill Park users were observed with aggressive dogs in the early mornings when few if any others were present, sometimes leaving the park, while appearing to avoid potential skirmishes. Other users were observed sidestepping to the adjacent enclosure or leaving the park entirely when these aggressive dogs were in the park. Though this occurred throughout the week at Spruill Park, dog aggression was more limited to weekends at Wagging Tail, when a greater variety of people and dogs were present. Similar aggressive incidents were occasionally observed at each dog park as

resulting in complaints or gossip. This includes one case that escalated into a serious fight, which led to alienation and complete avoidance of the park for one aggressive dog owner. In the case of a less serious clash at Wagging Tail, after expressing sincere apologies, one well-accepted regular was able to smooth over an incident, allowing peaceful relations to maintain harmony in the park.

Conclusion of observation themes. The small, wooded open space of Bosque Park connects apartment dwellers to their surrounding community, allowing them to experience nature. People often pass through the park on the way to a number of destinations, supporting activity in the active neighborhood. Though afternoon park users can relax and enjoy the peaceful setting for longer periods, park activity is often cursory and a matter of convenience and proximity to homes, with park visits generally lasting under ten minutes.

Conversely, the majority of dog park users remain 20 minutes or more, allowing a longer break than the non-dog park users, while supporting more opportunities to greet and speak to other people. Under normal circumstances, small and large dogs are separated, but users will sometimes share their enclosures with a different-sized dog, allowing them to separate from the occasional aggressive dog or to give their dogs or themselves a little company. Doing so was observed as helping to maintain a positive social environment and avoid potential conflicts.

With a large following of working and herding dogs, mid-morning and afternoon users are often focused on games of fetch, though they are sometimes encouraged by the actions of canines to converse with other people and seek help with dog care or training. Afternoon ball throwers are dedicated to their dogs' exercise but because they sometimes remain in the parks for substantial amounts of time, they may use electronic devices to keep themselves occupied.

Interaction is supported by the two dog parks in different ways. During slower hours, with users huddled together near central seating at the suburban dog park, social activity between users is often higher than at New Urban Spruill. Seating is less focused in New Urban Spruill, and people tend to scatter to more private areas, given more opportunities to do so. While integrated spaces support interaction at Spruill fence lines, people gather around central seating at suburban Wagging Tail, encouraged to talk by their proximity or the familiarity of dogs and people.

Personal schedules allow some to drop in freely throughout day, yet typical work schedules support the largest and most diverse crowds after 4pm, when both dog parks are active. The sound of conversation quickly dominates the park supported by repeat encounters, as a diversity of people with similar schedules gather together. Typical after-five regulars gather in small groups near the entrance of Spruill Dog Park, while others flock to the large crowd of regulars that gather daily on the park's northern edge. Enthusiastic regulars greet others as they come into suburban Wagging Tail after a long day, appearing happy to see each other as they catch up on current events. Suburban regulars are particularly adept at making others feel welcome, speaking over the crowd and inviting others into the conversation.

Though the pace sometimes quickens, as temperatures drop during the winter season, park users appear to enjoy the fresh, cool air and do not allow their conversations to be affected by otherwise intimidating weather conditions. Weekend activity differs at each park but is often more spread throughout the day and with a greater variety of people and dogs present. On weekends, unique dogs appear, such as Doberman pinschers, poodle mixes and basset hounds, dogs seldom seen throughout the week. As people often notice distinctive dogs and remember

them by name, the interesting mix of canines can sometimes encourage conversation and support a welcome environment for newcomers. This allows dogs to serve as markers or extensions of their owners, while welcoming people into conversation in a way similar to a third place regular. Families often appear on weekends at suburban Wagging Tail, supporting family time outdoors away from homes and around other people.

Though occasionally failing to notice their dogs have relieved themselves, dog park users are typically polite, supporting the dogs of others by providing water or filling water bowls. Though dog aggression can restrict park neutrality at times, discord is mostly avoided by a majority of users. Except for the rare incident of dog aggression, confirmed as leading to social exclusion, most hostile incidents blow over without the appearance of substantial offense. This is especially true for park regulars, who are established within the dog park community. No aggressive incidents were observed in Bosque Park, where people commonly appear to maintain control over dogs, given a leash, as required in the non-dog park. In fact, respective of park rules and etiquette in the parks, park users tend to support park harmony, especially given the sense of ownership taken on by some regulars who oversee activity and ensure users conform.

Chapter 6: Analysis of interviews.

This chapter first presents the analysis of the intercept survey of neighborhood friendliness. This is followed by an analysis of the responses of park users who took part in the interviews. First, it discusses the observations of non-dog Bosque Park, followed by those of the two dog parks. The chapter concludes with a summary and conclusions of the analyses.

Survey of neighborhood friendliness. While conducting the intercept survey of neighborhood friendliness, researcher casually greeted people walking through each neighborhood to test whether they would welcome the greeting and return it with a pleasant hello. In T-Zone 5, west of the North Dallas Tollway and within the New Urban neighborhood, researcher had no problem finding people walking along sidewalks to greet, and they responded in kind when researcher addressed them. People also responded kindly in the suburban neighborhood within T-Zones 3 and 4 when researcher was able to both access people and get their attention. Yet, significantly fewer people walking in the low-density T-Zone 3 areas of the suburban neighborhood made it difficult to find people outdoors to greet. People were visible outside the apartment complexes of T-Zone 4 within the designated suburban neighborhood and were friendly and responded in kind. Further, those seen outside were primarily those walking dogs, including two escorting a dog inside a small dog park and one on a balcony. However, in order to access enough people to meet the quota, researcher felt compelled to go inside the country club on the suburban neighborhood's southern side and enter retail establishments west of the park since a majority of people were observed driving their cars directly in front of these establishments and leaving after finishing indoor activities, seldom walking between facilities. When researcher was able to get the attention of people within the suburban neighborhood, the

vast majority of people responded kindly. The presence of people walking within T-Zone 5 of the New Urban neighborhood, however, suggests a stronger probability that they were neighborhood residents within walking distance of their homes. The paucity of visible people walking in the suburban neighborhood, especially within T-Zone 3, made it unclear whether the participants surveyed were residents of the designated neighborhood, since many were encountered inside establishments and were potentially drawn from the surrounding metropolitan area. Though the intercept survey resulted in positive responses from within both neighborhoods, it attests to a lack of walkability within the suburban neighborhood, with substantially fewer people visible outside on the street.

Discussion of New Urban non-dog park interviews. The typical Bosque Park user walks to the park regularly, with the majority of interviewees (64%) visiting the park often, or 3 to 7 times per week. These responses are telling in relation to the influences of neighborhood context and speaks to the convenience and walkability of the New Urban neighborhood.

Table 2. Frequency of use, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Rarely, 1-2 /week	7	16.7	17.5	17.5
	Often, 3-7/week	27	64.3	67.5	85.0
	Multiple times daily	6	14.3	15.0	100.0
	Total	40	95.2	100.0	
Missing System		2	4.8		
Total		42	100.0		

Though a limited number (19%) report being motivated to walk due to neighborhood paths and destinations, a significant 76% choose to walk because it is convenient or close to home. A limited 7% who claim to walk due to proximity to work is considered insignificant.

Table 3. Reason for walking, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Proximity to home convenience	32	76.2	86.5	86.5
	Proximity to work	3	7.1	8.1	94.6
	Too much time to walk	2	4.8	5.4	100.0
	Total	37	88.1	100.0	
Missing	System	5	11.9		
Total		42	100.0		

Table 4. Motivated by paths/destinations, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Paths/destinations	8	19.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	34	81.0		
Total		42	100.0		

One afternoon regular reports almost daily seeing the same person with their dog and calling them both by name, yet only a moderate 25% of Bosque users describe being drawn to the park by social factors, including 9.5% who are motivated to meet neighbors and 14% who are drawn to see friends and acquaintances.

Table 5. Drawn by neighbors, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Meet neighbors	4	9.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	38	90.5		
Total		42	100.0		

**Table 6. Drawn by friends/acquaintances
Bosque Park**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	See friends/acquaintances	6	14.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	36	85.7		
Total		42	100.0		

Though limited non-dog park users indicate a value placed on meeting neighbors, one noting its importance “especially in the area where you live”, the proportion of park users who express an interest in meeting people in the community is minimal.

The typical Bosque Park visitor, though using the park regularly, either tends not to experience repeat encounters or does so rarely, with only 29% experiencing such encounters often. This may be partly attributed to the moderate number of responses indicating park users are motivated to encounter people they know in the park (26%).

Table 7. Motivated by repeat encounters, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	11	26.2	26.2	26.2
	No	31	73.8	73.8	100.0
	Total	42	100.0	100.0	

Table 8. Encounters, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Often, 2-7/week	12	28.6	30.0	30.0
	Rarely, 1-2/week	19	45.2	47.5	77.5
	None	9	21.4	22.5	100.0
	Total	40	95.2	100.0	
Missing	System	2	4.8		
Total		42	100.0		

Though repeat encounters do occur within non-dog Bosque Park, the reported lack of desire to recreate within the park, and the relatively low frequencies of repeat encounters, both of which are factors that support third-place activity (Oldenburg, 1989), may limit the ability of this park to function as a third place. However, the data does indicate a desire by a considerable number of users to speak to their friends, acquaintances and neighbors while in the park.

Table 9. Motivated to speak, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Speak to friends, acquaintances and neighbors	14	33.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	28	66.7		
Total		42	100.0		

In fact, when asked about park features that excite, relax or encourage park visits, a majority note nature as a draw (55%). As one participant explains, “[b]ecause of the trees, it seems not as urban.” Combined with a moderately significant 40% who report being drawn to the park by the park’s central fountain, this attraction to park features may indicate a considerable proportion of users do appreciate the park as a place to relax, if only briefly.

Table 10. Natural park features, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Nature, trees	23	54.8	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	19	45.2		
Total		42	100.0		

Table 11. Fountain, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Water features	17	40.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	25	59.5		
Total		42	100.0		

A considerable 36% describe a peaceful, safe or relaxing setting when detailing their motivations for using the park, while one indicates, they are “[l]ooking for peace”. This comment, combined with a considerable presence (43%) who describe themselves as introverts and 21% who describe themselves as a little of both may indicate moderate proportions of participants may come to the park to enjoy the setting and are uninterested in interaction. Motivations can vary, however. For example, one self-described introvert expressed an effort to interact: “I’m trying to make myself more extroverted because I’m on the computer about eight hours/day.”

Table 12. Peaceful, safe, relaxing, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Peaceful, safe, relaxing	15	35.7	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	27	64.3		
Total		42	100.0		

Table 13. Introversion, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Introvert	18	42.9	42.9	42.9
	Extrovert	15	35.7	35.7	78.6
	Mixture	9	21.4	21.4	100.0
	Total	42	100.0	100.0	

As one participant points out, “[n]ot that many people gather here”, supporting responses related to motivations for park use which indicate a lack of desire to recreate in the urban space. A limited 7% note an appreciation that the park is well lit, which may indicate the presence of some after-hour visitors with full schedules, suggesting the potential of the park to support different lifestyles, as characteristic of the third place (Oldenburg, 1989). However, this limited proportion is insignificant. Further, a limited number of users who indicate a desire to recreate in the park fails to support the park as a socially active urban space.

Table 14. Well lit, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Well lit	3	7.1	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	39	92.9		
Total		42	100.0		

Though Bosque Park is not a dog park, typical dog walkers, or a significant 52% of participants, choose to walk there because they enjoy walking their dogs. This is the second most important reason provided for walking to Bosque Park.

Table 15. Motivated to walk the dog, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Like to walk dog	22	52.4	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	20	47.6		
Total		42	100.0		

As indicated by the following examples, some participants are more focused on the task of walking their dogs than on socializing, while a moderate proportion (23%) report a tendency to speak to others because they’re accompanied by dogs.

Table 16. Motivated by the presence of a dog Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	People w/dogs	10	23.8	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	32	76.2		
Total		42	100.0		

Walking the dogs can be an obligatory task or one more related to relaxation, depending on the circumstances. This first interviewee comment demonstrates enjoyment and a focus on dog walking. “I like spending time with her, and I like to see how she reacts to other dogs and how she smells things and observe her.” A second participant offers a different perspective. “While I enjoy conversation, I’m on a mission with my dog. I kind of just want to get done.” A third example indicates walks more focused on exercise. “We speed walk. My vet said he needs to lose five pounds.” While the first example suggests a more leisure-oriented experience, and the second one a tendency to hurry, all were focused on the task of walking their dogs.

Related to dog walking, 21% note a practical appreciation of cleanliness and clean-up supplies as a reason for using the park. Though this proportion of users is limited, the presence of those focused on the practical needs of dog walking may indicate a moderate proportion of Bosque Park trips are utilitarian in nature.

Table 17. Clean/clean-up supplies, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Clean or clean-up supplies	9	21.4	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	33	78.6		
Total		42	100.0		

Similarly, the gravel and concrete pathways that wind through the park are noted by a limited 10% of participants as a feature that encourages them to use the park. This feature can also relate to dogs, as one participant explains the combination of gravel and concrete can support cleanliness associated with dog walking. Though based on existing research, a dominance of

utilitarian activity in the park would limit the park’s potential as a place of meaningful interaction. However, this insignificant proportion fails to affirm such dominance in the park.

Table 18. Gravel/concrete paths, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Gravel or concrete paths	4	9.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	38	90.5		
Total		42	100.0		

Similarly, only a minimal 5% report being drawn to the park because it is dog friendly. This lack of focus on dog-friendliness may be related to preset expectations due to the dog-friendly nature of the overall community. Yet a strong reported use (52%) of the park as a place to walk dogs reinforces it as a place where people bring their pets. And when typical Bosque visitors wave or speak to acquaintances, most are accompanied by a dog, indicating a tendency to walk dogs in Bosque Park may strengthen the park’s ability to support some level of social interaction.

Table 19. Dog friendly, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dog friendly	2	4.8	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	40	95.2		
Total		42	100.0		

Table 20. Dog accompaniment, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	37	88.1	90.2	90.2
	No	4	9.5	9.8	100.0
	Total	41	97.6	100.0	
Missing	System	1	2.4		
Total		42	100.0		

Yet, while a majority of interviewees acknowledge chatting while in the park, a tendency for conversations to be inconsequential may limit the ability of the park to function as a third place.

Table 21. Chatting, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	24	57.1	58.5	58.5
	No	13	31.0	31.7	90.2
	Rarely/sometimes	4	9.5	9.8	100.0
	Total	41	97.6	100.0	
Missing	System	1	2.4		
Total		42	100.0		

This tendency for more fleeting interaction is indicated by a limited number of participants who describe dialogues as intimate (7%) or emotionally intense (2%) and almost half who report casual exchanges, described by one participant as cursory in nature, such as “[h]i, how are you?”

Table 22. Intimacy, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	3	7.1	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	39	92.9		
Total		42	100.0		

Table 23. Intensity, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	1	2.4	33.3	33.3
	Sometimes	2	4.8	66.7	100.0
	Total	3	7.1	100.0	
Missing	System	39	92.9		
Total		42	100.0		

Table 24. Casual, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	20	47.6	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	22	52.4		
Total		42	100.0		

Though some dialogues are described as “[m]eaningful because they share small talk about the neighborhood and events”, this proportion is only moderate (21%), along with an equal number who describe dialogues as reciprocal.

Table 25. Reciprocity, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	9	21.4	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	33	78.6		
Total		42	100.0		

A moderate 21% describe talk that is meaningful, while slightly lower proportions describe conversation centered around dogs. Sometimes described as conversations related to dog care, a more modest proportion (29%) describe conversations that are socially supportive.

Table 26. Meaningful, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	9	21.4	90.0	90.0
	Sometimes	1	2.4	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	23.8	100.0	
Missing	System	32	76.2		
Total		42	100.0		

Table 27. Dog-centered, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	8	19.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	34	81.0		
Total		42	100.0		

Table 28. Supportive, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	12	28.6	92.3	92.3
	No	1	2.4	7.7	100.0
	Total	13	31.0	100.0	
Missing	System	29	69.0		
Total		42	100.0		

A considerable proportion of participants do exhibit robust interaction, however, with relations that extend into personal lives. While a modest 24% report exchanging contact information, slightly higher proportions (26%) report visiting other park users at their homes, while 26% report socializing together outside the park, when relations extend to commonly used destinations in the neighborhood.

Table 29. Visit, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	11	26.2	26.8	26.8
	No	30	71.4	73.2	100.0
	Total	41	97.6	100.0	
Missing	System	1	2.4		
Total		42	100.0		

Table 30. Social media, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	10	23.8	24.4	24.4
	No	29	69.0	70.7	95.1
	Rarely/sometimes	2	4.8	4.9	100.0
	Total	41	97.6	100.0	
Missing	System	1	2.4		
Total		42	100.0		

Table 31. Outside interaction, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Meet	11	26.2	26.8	26.8
	No	27	64.3	65.9	92.7
	Rarely/sometimes	3	7.1	7.3	100.0
	Total	41	97.6	100.0	
Missing	System	1	2.4		
Total		42	100.0		

When asked where they meet up, respondents most commonly note establishments inside the neighborhood (21%), compared to only 2% who meet up outside the neighborhood, and 12% who note visiting other park users at their homes. The presence of this stronger level of interaction utilizing venues within the neighborhood may be evidence that the neighborhood is supportive of the convenience present in the casual environment, which Oldenburg (1989) describes as supportive of an effective third place.

Table 32. Establishments inside neighborhood, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Establishments inside neighborhood	9	21.4	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	33	78.6		
Total		42	100.0		

Table 33. Establishments outside neighborhood Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Establishments outside neighborhood	1	2.4	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	41	97.6		
Total		42	100.0		

Table 34. Location of visits, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Home	5	11.9	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	37	88.1		
Total		42	100.0		

That a substantial majority of Bosque users (69%) feel a sense of community in the park may indicate the presence of a supportive neighborhood with common amenities that allow convenient interaction outside the park. Further, a considerable (40%) commonly identify with social factors when defining their sense of community associated with the park. This includes a moderate 23% who report an enjoyment associated with friendly people yet a limited 16% who identify with seeing the same people repeatedly in the park.

Table 35. Sense of park community, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	29	69.0	70.7	70.7
	No or not really	7	16.7	17.1	87.8
	Unsure	2	4.8	4.9	92.7
	Somewhat	3	7.1	7.3	100.0
	Total	41	97.6	100.0	
Missing	System	1	2.4		
Total		42	100.0		

Table 36. Friendly people, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Enjoy friendly people	10	23.8	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	32	76.2		
Total		42	100.0		

Table 37. Acquaintances, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	See each other repeatedly	7	16.7	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	35	83.3		
Total		42	100.0		

Limited proportions of participants describe an active park atmosphere (9%) as contributing to their sense of community with the park, “[t]here’s a lot of rollicking, running dogs, talk”. However, more moderate numbers (26%) paint a picture related to the closely-knit neighborhood, describing a community of supportive people with common amenities.

Table 38. Park activity, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Park activity	4	9.5	50.0	50.0
	Intimate, relaxed, comfortable	4	9.5	50.0	100.0
	Total	8	19.0	100.0	
Missing	System	34	81.0		
Total		42	100.0		

Table 39. Closely knit, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Closely knit, supportive people who live close	11	26.2	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	31	73.8		
Total		42	100.0		

While the fourth most common response (12%) attributes sense of park community to the presence of dogs, a moderate proportion describe the closely knit neighborhood (26%), and a more considerable (40%) relate it to social factors. This data may indicate contextual and social factors may be playing a more defined role in evoking sense of community. Considering the

specified influence of dogs on this interaction, however, suggests the importance of dogs may be understated, given that a majority of people who speak to other park users are commonly accompanied by a dog.

Table 40. Dogs, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dogs	5	11.9	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	37	88.1		
Total		42	100.0		

Moving to the question of sense of community, an overwhelming proportion (74%) note a sense of community in relation to the neighborhood.

Table 41. Sense of community, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	31	73.8	73.8	73.8
	Somewhat	3	7.1	7.1	81.0
	No/not really	5	11.9	11.9	92.9
	Unsure	1	2.4	2.4	95.2
	NA not from neighborhood	2	4.8	4.8	100.0
Total		42	100.0	100.0	

Table 42. Park activity, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Park activity	4	9.5	50.0	50.0
	Intimate, relaxed, comfortable, inviting	4	9.5	50.0	100.0
	Total	8	19.0	100.0	
Missing	System	34	81.0		
Total		42	100.0		

A moderate proportion (34%) of these relate sense of community to an active neighborhood. This includes almost 10% who note park activity, 12% who describe neighborhood events and 12% who describe outside activity. Accounts of “restaurants with regulars” and “a neighborhood conducive to outdoor activity” allude to this active atmosphere. Similarly, a limited proportion (14%) attribute sense of community to neighborhood paths and destinations, potentially

contributing to the active atmosphere cherished by participants. However, this data is limited and is not significant in proportion to the sample.

**Table 43. Planned events/management
Bosque Park**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Planned events/management	5	11.9	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	37	88.1		
Total		42	100.0		

Table 44. Paths/destinations, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neighborhood paths/destinations	6	14.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	36	85.7		
Total		42	100.0		

Table 45. Neighborhood activity, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Outside activity	5	11.9	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	37	88.1		
Total		42	100.0		

The small-town layout described by a limited (9%) relates to Oldenburg’s descriptions of a pre-World War II setting where Main Street functions as a third place and where small towners were likely to bump into people they know. The limited nature of this data and a slight 5% who describe a comfortable feel are considered insignificant in proportion to the sample, however. Yet comments describing interaction with owners and patrons and seeing the same people “both in the park and the community” make reference to a closely knit neighborhood with common amenities described by 14%, yet the modest proportion is not considered noteworthy.

A slight 7% note sense of safety as playing a role in sense of community. As mentioned by one resident, who explains, “[y]ou can take your dog for a walk at 3 or 4am and nothing happens, and you see police very often.” Though sense of community may relate to other factors,

such as neighborhood activity, this limited proportion of users is considered insignificant to the study.

Table 46. Sense of safety neighborhood, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Feels safe	3	7.1	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	39	92.9		
Total		42	100.0		

Table 47. Neighborhood layout, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Layout, town within city	4	9.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	38	90.5		
Total		42	100.0		

However, those who do not note a sense of community, most commonly attribute this to not having a dog. In fact, several comments stress the importance of dogs on interaction. One explains “[p]eople with dogs seem to interact a lot”. Another participant notes “without the

Table 48. Dog friendly area, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dog friendly area	3	7.1	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	39	92.9		
Total		42	100.0		

dogs, people don’t come out much.” These comments suggest that the influence of dogs, which support sociability, may be understated.

Table 49. Lacks sense of community, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	People don't pick up clean	1	2.4	25.0	25.0
	Need a dog	2	4.8	50.0	75.0
	High turnover	1	2.4	25.0	100.0
	Total	4	9.5	100.0	
Missing	System	38	90.5		
Total		42	100.0		

A respondent whose apartment overlooks Bosque Park reveals discontentment, “I feel like you have to have a dog to participate. I see it when I look out the window. I see it in others’ interactions or taking pictures.” She, who was on the way to her car, is among many Bosque users who quickly traverse the park on their way somewhere else. One Bosque user professed to be on the way to Spruill Dog Park, a trip taken every afternoon to meet the same people. Another Bosque user, also a Spruill regular, in crossing through to his apartment, explains a sense of community linked to the neighborhood dog park, where he sees people he knows. Explaining that he just strolls through Bosque Park, he pronounces that the dog park “makes a real neighborhood out of what otherwise might be nothing more than strangers.”

This comment suggests the dog park is a significant destination that brings dog owners in the community together. However, one man pushing a baby carriage expresses a different sentiment, explaining “[we] have a child, and most people don’t. More things to do here for dogs than children.” For him, the dog park is likely a negative influence on sense of community.

Though for moderate participants (28%), who note the size of dogs can have an inhibiting social effect, for a significant majority (64%), social interaction is unaffected by size or breed of dog.

Table 50. Breed inhibition, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	14	33.3	33.3	33.3
	No	27	64.3	64.3	97.6
	Sometimes	1	2.4	2.4	100.0
	Total	42	100.0	100.0	

Table 51. Reason for inhibition, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Size	12	28.6	66.7	66.7
	Aggressive breed	1	2.4	5.6	72.2
	Aggression	5	11.9	27.8	100.0
	Total	18	42.9	100.0	
Missing	System	24	57.1		
Total		42	100.0		

Table 52. Dog accompaniment, Bosque Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	37	88.1	90.2	90.2
	No	4	9.5	9.8	100.0
	Total	41	97.6	100.0	
Missing	System	1	2.4		
Total		42	100.0		

Though the influence of dogs may be limited in relation to sense of community, their role in bringing people outdoors is evident in encouraging people to walk to the park, as indicated by a majority of park users and based on 88% of participants, who report the people they encounter, wave or speak to are mostly commonly accompanied by a dog.

Discussion of New Urban dog park interviews.

A significant majority of participants (70%) go to Spruill Dog Park three to seven times per week. While (87%) walk to the park daily, only a limited proportion (10%) note neighborhood walking paths and destinations as influencing their decisions to walk. The vast majority (91%) choose to walk because the park is close or convenient to their home.

Table 53. Frequency of use, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Rarely, 1-2/week	1	2.1	2.3	2.3
	Often, 3-7/week	33	70.2	75.0	77.3
	Multiple times/day	10	21.3	22.7	100.0
	Total	44	93.6	100.0	
Missing	System	3	6.4		
Total		47	100.0		

Table 54. Transportation to park, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Walk	41	87.2	93.2	93.2
	Drive	3	6.4	6.8	100.0
	Total	44	93.6	100.0	
Missing	System	3	6.4		
Total		47	100.0		

Table 55. Motivated by proximity, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Proximity to home/convenience	43	91.5	95.6	95.6
	Proximity to work	2	4.3	4.4	100.0
	Total	45	95.7	100.0	
Missing	System	2	4.3		
Total		47	100.0		

Table 56. Motivated by paths/destinations, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Enjoy walking or paths/destinations	5	10.6	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	42	89.4		
Total		47	100.0		

While a moderate 21% note the location of the park as a motivation for visiting, a majority of participants (57%) note the dog play area as a draw, while related to this, a moderate 21% note energy release or exercise as important.

Table 57. Dog play area, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dog play area	27	57.4	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	20	42.6		
Total		47	100.0		

Table 58. Location close to home, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Close to home	10	21.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	37	78.7		
Total		47	100.0		

Table 59. Energy release, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Energy release	10	21.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	37	78.7		
Total		47	100.0		

Physical factors work together, including a convenience to home, noted by a modest 21%, and park layout, noted by 19%, to provide a convenient place where participants can take their dogs to play and exercise. The quiet area, described by a limited 15% of participants as a reason for using the park, supports the park as a relaxed gathering place, consistent with third place criteria. The park's proximity to homes supports walkability for 91.5% of participants. Such walkability supports the convenience and casual environment noted by Oldenburg (1989) as supportive of the effective third place.

Table 60. Park layout/design, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Size/Layout/design	9	19.1	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	38	80.9		
Total		47	100.0		

Table 61. Quiet neighborhood, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	(Quiet) neighborhood	7	14.9	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	40	85.1		
Total		47	100.0		

Limited responses describe a relaxing quality (13%). One participant narrates, “[t]he dog park is almost therapeutic in a way, watching all the dogs play.” Related to relaxation, seating, noted by only 8.5%, is noted as an insignificant influence on park activity. Similarly, watering facilities, noted by 8.5%, and Wi-fi and grass, noted by 4% respectively, were also considered insignificant influences on park use.

Table 62. Relaxing, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Relaxing	6	12.8	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	41	87.2		
Total		47	100.0		

Table 63. Seating, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Seating	4	8.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	43	91.5		
Total		47	100.0		

A majority of users (53%) are motivated to see their friends, neighbors and acquaintances, supporting desires to return and recreate, supportive of the third place (Oldenburg, 1989).

Table 64. Motivated to see friends/acquaintances Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Friends, neighbors/ acquaintances	25	53.2	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	22	46.8		
Total		47	100.0		

The vast majority of Spruill Dog Park users (91.5%) indicate they wave or speak to acquaintances, friends and neighbors every time or mostly every time they visit in the park. A moderate proportion of users (23%) note an enjoyment or desire for interaction as an important reason for greeting or speaking to them.

Table 65. Frequency of encounters, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Every time, mostly every time, 5-7/week	43	91.5	91.5	91.5
	Often, 3-4/week	3	6.4	6.4	97.9
	Moved in recently and don't know	1	2.1	2.1	100.0
Total		47	100.0	100.0	

The presence of such repeat encounters is a crucial attribute indicative of third place activity, as described by Oldenburg (1989).

Table 66. Desire for interaction, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Desire/enjoy interaction/friendly people	11	23.4	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	36	76.6		
Total		47	100.0		

Negative perceptions of dogs and/or negative dog behavior is important to the degree that it potentially minimizes third-place activity, while positive perceptions of dogs and their behavior are supportive of third-place activity to the extent that these perceptions support a playful or accepting atmosphere.

Though one Pitt Bull owner reports a lack of acceptance in his community after an aggressive incident with his dog, typical regulars see and speak to acquaintances accompanied by a dog every time or mostly every time, noting their interaction is unaffected by the size or

breed of dogs accompanying park users. Though size is noted as a moderate influence by 23%, existing data supports the dog park as a third place due to a majority of users (66%) who describe their interaction as unaffected by perceptions of dog types based on size and/or breed.

Perceptions regarding aggression, noted by 13%, and aggressive types, noted by 6%, are considered insignificant influences on interaction. Similarly, a limited and insignificant proportion (8.5%) note their interaction depends on their dogs' relations with other dogs, for example, "dog stops and smells other dogs, and then we talk." Since a significant majority of users report speaking to other park users who are accompanied by a dog, dogs may support a positive social atmosphere, supportive of the third place (Oldenburg, 1989).

Table 67. Dog accompaniment, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	45	95.7	95.7	95.7
	No	1	2.1	2.1	97.9
	Other	1	2.1	2.1	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

Table 68. Dog inhibition, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	16	34.0	34.0	34.0
	No	31	66.0	66.0	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

Table 69. Size inhibition, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Size	11	23.4	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	36	76.6		
Total		47	100.0		

Typical Spruill Park users are motivated by the opportunity of repeat encounters (79%), while only a moderate proportion (21%) report being there solely for their dogs. The largest

Table 70. Motivated by encounters, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	37	78.7	78.7	78.7
	No	10	21.3	21.3	100.0
Total		47	100.0	100.0	

proportion note social factors as contributing to their motivations to speak to familiar park users, including a moderate 32% who note friends and acquaintances and a notable 42%, who note enjoyment or a general desire for interaction as a reason for speaking to other park users. By encouraging people to return and recreate, these considerable levels of motivation are supportive of third place activity. Only a limited percentage (4%) note the closely-knit community as a factor drawing them to interaction. This percentage is minimal and is not considered a significant influence.

Table 71. Motivated by friends/acquaintances, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Seeing friends or people they know	15	31.9	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	32	68.1		
Total		47	100.0		

Table 72. Motivated by interaction, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Enjoy or desire interaction	20	42.6	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	27	57.4		
Total		47	100.0		

A significant majority of users (91.5%) affirm chatting with other park users while in the park. While for many, their conversation with other users is not limited to the boundaries of the park, as indicated by a significant proportion (64%) who exchange contact information.

Table 73. Chatting, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	43	91.5	91.5	91.5
	Sometimes	4	8.5	8.5	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

Table 74. Social media, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	30	63.8	63.8	63.8
	No	9	19.1	19.1	83.0
	Sometimes	4	8.5	8.5	91.5
	Not yet	4	8.5	8.5	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

This exchange of contact information is noted as supportive of keeping park users connected outside the park. One participant describes dinners supported by “group texts, walking dogs and celebrating birthdays together.”

While a significant proportion (47%) report visiting other users outside the dog park, 49% report meeting up for coffee or other activities. This behavior is indicative of strong ties, as defined herein based on Wellman (1988) and Llewellyn (2019).

Table 75. Outside interaction, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	23	48.9	48.9	48.9
	No	15	31.9	31.9	80.9
	Sometimes	4	8.5	8.5	89.4
	Not yet	5	10.6	10.6	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

Since significant proportions of socializing occur at establishments within the New Urban neighborhood (45%) and on neighborhood sidewalks (10%), the reported behavior indicates the New Urban may be supportive of a convenience associated with common gathering places and a casual environment that supports spontaneity, as described by Oldenburg (1989). For example, one participant describes Sunday meet ups at the dog park, often followed by spontaneous walks to a nearby restaurant.

Table 76. Visiting, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	22	46.8	46.8	46.8
	No	20	42.6	42.6	89.4
	Sometimes	2	4.3	4.3	93.6
	Not yet	3	6.4	6.4	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

A limited proportion (13%) note establishments outside the neighborhood as a destination for interacting with other park users. Participants who report driving to the parks do not indicate the same tendency to exchange contact information, visit or meet up with other park users. Though a limited 14.9% note home as a destination for visiting, combined with a considerable proportion who report walking to the park, this data may to some extent support tendencies to interact with other park users within the neighborhood.

Table 77. Neighborhood establishments, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Establishments inside neighborhood	21	44.7	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	26	55.3		
Total		47	100.0		

Table 78. Neighborhood sidewalks, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neighborhood sidewalks	5	10.6	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	42	89.4		
Total		47	100.0		

Table 79. Establishments outside neighborhood, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Establishment outside neighborhood	6	12.8	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	41	87.2		
Total		47	100.0		

A majority of participants (62%) describe themselves as extroverts. These reported tendencies support the potential for an active social environment and lively third place activity, as described by Oldenburg (1989).

Table 80. Introversion, Spruill Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Introvert	12	25.5	25.5	25.5
	Extrovert	29	61.7	61.7	87.2
	Mixture	6	12.8	12.8	100.0
Total		47	100.0	100.0	

An overwhelming majority of participants report a sense of community associated with the park (87%). The majority of these responses link sense of park community to social factors, including 32% who attribute sense of park community to the presence of friendly people who use the park, and 34% who note friends and acquaintances.

Table 81. Sense of park community, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	41	87.2	89.1	89.1
	No or not really	2	4.3	4.3	93.5
	Unsure	1	2.1	2.2	95.7
	Somewhat	2	4.3	4.3	100.0
	Total	46	97.9	100.0	
Missing	System	1	2.1		
Total		47	100.0		

Table 82. Friendly people, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	People are friendly	15	31.9	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	32	68.1		
Total		47	100.0		

Table 83. Friends/acquaintances, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	See friends/acquaintances	16	34.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	31	66.0		
Total		47	100.0		

A moderate proportion (34%) attribute sense of park community to the closely-knit neighborhood and common interests, while a limited 17% tie the feeling to a common interest in dogs. These factors together indicate a sense of unity amongst park users characteristic of the third place. A minimal 4%, considered insignificant here, attributes sense of park community to the neighborhood.

Table 84. Closely knit, Spruill Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Closely-knit/supportive, live close	16	34.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	31	66.0		
Total		47	100.0		

Table 85. Dogs, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dogs	8	17.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	39	83.0		
Total		47	100.0		

Table 86. Sense of community, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	33	70.2	75.0	75.0
	Somewhat	1	2.1	2.3	77.3
	No or not really	7	14.9	15.9	93.2
	Unsure	1	2.1	2.3	95.5
	NA Don't live in neighborhood	2	4.3	4.5	100.0
	Total		44	93.6	100.0
Missing	System	3	6.4		
Total		47	100.0		

Slightly over 70% describe a sense of community with their neighborhood. This is a lower proportion than those who express a sense of community linked to the park (87%). As one

participant explains, “organized events don’t happen organically around social groups” like they do in the dog park. An insignificant 4%, who attribute sense of community to planned community events, may indicate participants supported by a strong sense of park community rely less on programmed events.

Table 87. Planned events, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Planned events	2	4.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	45	95.7		
Total		47	100.0		

Similarly, one participant affirms a sense of community in the park but notes only a slight sense of community in the neighborhood, explaining, [t]he people in my actual apartments, we don’t really talk.”

When describing sense of community for the neighborhood, 36% value social factors, including a moderate 21% who note the presence of friends and acquaintances, and a limited 15% who note the presence of friendly people. A similar proportion (13%) tie sense of community to a closely knit community and common experiences. As one explains, “[e]veryone experiences the same activities with you so we understand each other.” An insignificant proportion (6%) note neighborhood paths and destinations as contributing to a sense of community.

Table 88. Friends/acquaintances, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	See friends/acquaintances	10	21.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	37	78.7		
Total		47	100.0		

Table 89. Friendly people, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	People are friendly	7	14.9	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	40	85.1		
Total		47	100.0		

Table 90. Closely knit, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Closely knit, common experiences	6	12.8	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	41	87.2		
Total		47	100.0		

The typical Spruill Park regular looks forward to their interaction in the park, while a significant 91% report taking part in conversation. Moderate participants (23%) describe their verbal communication as reciprocal. While 23% describe talk as intimate at times, a limited proportion (17%) note emotionally intense or intimate discussions. This indicates a natural variation, consistent with real life.

Table 91. Intimacy, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	8	17.0	22.9	22.9
	No	16	34.0	45.7	68.6
	Sometimes	11	23.4	31.4	100.0
	Total	35	74.5	100.0	
Missing	System	12	25.5		
Total		47	100.0		

Table 92. Intensity, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	8	17.0	25.0	25.0
	No	14	29.8	43.8	68.8
	Sometimes	10	21.3	31.3	100.0
	Total	32	68.1	100.0	
Missing	System	15	31.9		
Total		47	100.0		

Table 93. Reciprocity, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	11	23.4	50.0	50.0
	No	4	8.5	18.2	68.2
	Sometimes	7	14.9	31.8	100.0
	Total	22	46.8	100.0	
Missing	System	25	53.2		
Total		47	100.0		

A notable 34% describe socially supportive conversations, making recommendations for animal care, while a limited 6%, considered insignificant here, describe conversations centered around dogs. One participant ties meaningful and supportive conversations to dog ownership, noting “I deal with anxiety disorder/panic attacks. I can say having a dog changed my life, interacting with people to socialize mine!”

One comment suggests park users support each other by helping other users care for their dogs. “We have become friends and will help each other with our dogs if needed”.

Table 94. Supportive, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	16	34.0	40.0	40.0
	No	15	31.9	37.5	77.5
	Sometimes	9	19.1	22.5	100.0
	Total	40	85.1	100.0	
Missing	System	7	14.9		
Total		47	100.0		

Notable proportions describe conversations as casual (36%) and meaningful (38%). This data suggests the presence of considerable face-to-face social interaction, consistent with third place activity (Oldenburg, 1989).

Table 95. Meaningful, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	18	38.3	42.9	42.9
	No	14	29.8	33.3	76.2
	Sometimes	10	21.3	23.8	100.0
	Total	42	89.4	100.0	
Missing	System	5	10.6		
Total		47	100.0		

Table 96. Casual, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	17	36.2	94.4	94.4
	Sometimes	1	2.1	5.6	100.0
	Total	18	38.3	100.0	
Missing	System	29	61.7		
Total		47	100.0		

Related to casual conversation, though considered insignificant, a slight 6% describe conversations as centered around dogs.

Table 97. Dog-centered, Spruill Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	3	6.4	75.0	75.0
	Sometimes	1	2.1	25.0	100.0
	Total	4	8.5	100.0	
Missing	System	43	91.5		
Total		47	100.0		

Discussion of suburban dog park interviews. Like in the New Urban dog park, the typical Wagging Tail user comes to the park regularly, or three to seven times per week. The presence of regular park users is indicative of third place activity. Unlike the New Urban parks, the vast majority (73.5%) of suburban park users drive to the park, indicating contextual influences may affect these transportation methods. While the largest proportion (80%) place a high priority on convenience, insignificant proportions drive due to a danger linked to walking and mobility issues (4%).

Table 98. Frequency of use, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Rarely	3	6.1	6.5	6.5
	1-4 times per week	29	59.2	63.0	69.6
	5-7 times per week	12	24.5	26.1	95.7
	Multiple times/day	2	4.1	4.3	100.0
	Total	46	93.9	100.0	
Missing	System	3	6.1		
Total		49	100.0		

Table 99. Transportation to park, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Drive	36	73.5	97.3	97.3
	Mixture of both	1	2.0	2.7	100.0
	Total	37	75.5	100.0	
Missing	System	12	24.5		
Total		49	100.0		

Table 100. Convenience/Proximity, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Convenience/proximity to home	39	79.6	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	10	20.4		
Total		49	100.0		

When asked whether certain park features excite, relax or encourage participants to use the park, the highest proportion (49%) note a space where their dogs can exercise and socialize as important.

Table 101. Dog exercise and socialization Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dog exercise, separation areas	24	49.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	25	51.0		
Total		49	100.0		

The second most common motivating factor for using the park is nature and shade trees, noted by a moderate 29% of participants. A similar proportion notes a relaxing/therapeutic quality, which they relate to the presence of dogs (33%). These descriptions may relate to a psychological comfort supportive of the third place as described by Oldenburg (1989). Insignificant proportions under 18% note fewer aggressive dogs, seating, watering, clean-up facilities and park layout.

Table 102. Natural features, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Nature/trees/shade	14	28.6	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	35	71.4		
Total		49	100.0		

Table 103. Relaxing/therapeutic dogs, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Relaxing, therapeutic/dogs	16	32.6	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	33	67.4		
Total		49	100.0		

A notable proportion (37%) report experiencing repeat encounters every time or mostly every time (5-7 times per week), while 24.5% report seeing the same people 2-4 times per week. A significant majority (61%) affirm they are motivated to use the park based on seeing the same

people in the park. This data is indicative of desires to recreate and return described by Oldenburg (1989) as supportive of the third place.

Table 104. Encounters, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Mostly every time 5-7 per week	18	36.7	40.0	40.0
	Often, 2-4 week	12	24.5	26.7	66.7
	Rarely	8	16.3	17.8	84.4
	None	2	4.1	4.4	88.9
	Don't know	3	6.1	6.7	95.6
	Sometimes, once week	2	4.1	4.4	100.0
	Total	45	91.8	100.0	
Missing	System	4	8.2		
Total		49	100.0		

Table 105. Motivated by repeat encounters, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	30	61.2	61.2	61.2
	No	17	34.7	34.7	95.9
	Other	1	2.0	2.0	98.0
	Somewhat	1	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	49	100.0	100.0	

When asked to describe motivations for speaking to familiar park users, the largest proportion (33%) note the presence of friends and acquaintances. Insignificant proportions note schedules that line up (14%) or a general enjoyment of friendly interaction.

Table 106. Motivated by friends, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	See friends, acquaintances	16	32.7	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	33	67.3		
Total		49	100.0		

A majority of participants (61%) are uninhibited by certain dog traits. Of those whose interaction is influenced by dog characteristics, the biggest concern is size of the dog (33%). A moderate number of participants (20%) are encouraged to interact with familiar dogs, based on their behavior, and 18% are encouraged to interact with people who have cute or similar breeds.

Table 107. Breed inhibition, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	16	32.7	32.7	32.7
	No	30	61.2	61.2	93.9
	Sometimes	3	6.1	6.1	100.0
	Total	49	100.0	100.0	

Table 108. Dogs' preference, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dogs' preference for certain dogs	16	32	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	33	68		
Total		49	100.0		

Table 109. Encouraged by similar breeds, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Similar/cute breeds	9	18.4	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	40	81.6		
Total		49	100.0		

Table 110. Familiar dogs, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	See dogs	1	2.0	10.0	10.0
	Familiar dogs	9	18.4	90.0	100.0
	Total	10	20.4	100.0	
Missing	System	39	79.6		
Total		49	100.0		

Though the largest proportion of participants describe themselves as introverts (45%), and 20% as a mixture of both, a significant majority (78%) report chatting with other park users while in the park. This behavior indicates a dominance of conversation akin to the third place (Oldenburg, 1989).

Table 111. Introversion, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Introvert	22	44.9	44.9	44.9
	Extrovert	17	34.7	34.7	79.6
	Mixture	10	20.4	20.4	100.0
	Total	49	100.0	100.0	

Table 112. Chatting, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	38	77.6	77.6	77.6
	No	5	10.2	10.2	87.8
	Sometimes	6	12.2	12.2	100.0
	Total	49	100.0	100.0	

While a moderate 20% admit to exchanging contact information, a limited proportion (12%) report visiting other users, while only 8% report socializing with other park users outside the dog park, such as meeting up for coffee, entertainment or some other activity. This limited interaction is indicative of a dominance of weak ties, as defined herein based on Wellman (1988) and Llewellyn (2019).

Table 113. Social media, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	10	20.4	20.4	20.4
	No	32	65.3	65.3	85.7
	Rarely	2	4.1	4.1	89.8
	Sometimes	5	10.2	10.2	100.0
	Total	49	100.0	100.0	

Table 114. Outside interaction, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	4	8.2	8.2	8.2
	No	43	87.8	87.8	95.9
	Rarely	1	2.0	2.0	98.0
	Sometimes	1	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	49	100.0	100.0	

Table 115. Visiting, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	6	12.2	12.2	12.2
	No	42	85.7	85.7	98.0
	Rarely	1	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	49	100.0	100.0	

Those who do report meeting up with other park users note using local establishments (6%), while 2% note establishments inside the neighborhood. This data is indicative of negative contextual influences on interaction.

Table 116. Location of visits, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Establishment in neighborhood	1	2.0	12.5	12.5
	Local establishments the dog park	3	6.1	37.5	50.0
	Total	4	8.2	50.0	100.0
	System	41	83.7		
Missing		49	100.0		

Wagging Tail users do appear to value their dog park relationships, given that 88% note a sense of community associated with the park. Of those, 35% attribute this to friendly, welcoming people, and 33% note conversation with regulars. These attributes strongly relate to third place activity, according to Oldenburg (1989).

Table 117. Sense of community park, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	43	87.8	87.8	87.8
	No or not really	2	4.1	4.1	91.8
	Unsure	2	4.1	4.1	95.9
	Somewhat	2	4.1	4.1	100.0
	Total	49	100.0	100.0	

Table 118. Accepting people, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	People are friendly/welcoming/relaxed	17	34.7	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	32	65.3		
Total		49	100.0		

Table 119. Conversation with regulars, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Regulars that talk to each other	16	32.6	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	33	67.4		
Total		49	100.0		

A moderate 24.5% relate sense of park community to common interests, while a limited 14% note the shared neighborhood facility. This data indicates a sense of unity amongst dog park users, indicative of the third place (Oldenburg, 1989).

Table 120. Common interests, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Common interests/dogs	12	24.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	37	75.5		
Total		49	100.0		

Table 121. Shared neighborhood facility, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Shared facility	7	14.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	42	85.7		
Total		49	100.0		

A considerable 47% of users reports a sense of community with their neighborhood.

Table 122. Sense of community, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	23	46.9	48.9	48.9
	Somewhat	5	10.2	10.6	59.6
	No or not really	18	36.7	38.3	97.9
	Unsure	1	2.0	2.1	100.0
	Total	47	95.9	100.0	
Missing	System	2	4.1		
Total		49	100.0		

Those who report sense of community most often relate it to social factors, with 22% noting neighbors as friendly and a limited 16% who attribute the feeling to individual apartment complexes.

Table 123. Friendly people/neighbors, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neighbors are friendly	11	22.4	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	38	77.6		
Total		49	100.0		

Table 124. Apartments, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Multi-family	8	16.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	41	83.7		
Total		49	100.0		

The same proportion (16%) note a closely knit/common purpose as influencing their sense of community. Slight proportions (6%) relate sense of community to other dog owners and planned events (8%), considered here as insignificant to the study.

Table 125. Closely knit, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Common/similar purpose	8	16.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	41	83.7		
Total		49	100.0		

Table 126. Planned events, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Planned events	4	8.2	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	45	91.8		
Total		49	100.0		

Of those who did not report a sense of community, 14% note people in their neighborhood keep to themselves. Yet more than negative contextual influences on interaction, this may be due to the introverted nature of the respondents.

Table 127. People keep to themselves, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	People keep to themselves/homes	7	14.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	42	85.7		
Total		49	100.0		

Wagging Tail participants note an appreciation of their conversations in the dog park. While a limited proportion describe conversations as emotionally intense (6%) or intimate (8%), one participant admits to limiting the intensity of conversations because “you know you’re going to see them again.” As one explains, “I like to keep my dog park friends in the dog park and avoid getting to be too close because that can mean more obligations.” One participant notes a tendency to take advantage of the nonchalant relations, explaining, “it’s easier to talk about some intimate conversation with strangers as the likelihood of seeing them again is slim.”

Table 128. Intimacy, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	4	8.2	8.3	8.3
	No	37	75.5	77.1	85.4
	Sometimes	7	14.3	14.6	100.0
	Total	48	98.0	100.0	
Missing	System	1	2.0		
Total		49	100.0		

Table 129. Intensity, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	3	6.1	6.5	6.5
	No	33	67.3	71.7	78.3
	Sometimes	10	20.4	21.7	100.0
	Total	46	93.9	100.0	
Missing	System	3	6.1		
Total		49	100.0		

The reciprocal nature of Wagging Tail conversations described by a moderate 24% of participants is illustrated by one participant, who explains, “[w]e usually talk about things that anyone that walks up could join in like the news, traveling, if you’ve gone on a trip or dog.” Similarly, conversations are described by a moderately high (33%) as socially supportive.

Table 130. Reciprocity, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	12	24.5	57.1	57.1
	No	6	12.2	28.6	85.7
	Sometimes	3	6.1	14.3	100.0
	Total	21	42.9	100.0	
Missing	System	28	57.1		
Total		49	100.0		

Table 131. Supportive, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	16	32.7	34.8	34.8
	No	24	49.0	52.2	87.0
	Sometimes	6	12.2	13.0	100.0
	Total	46	93.9	100.0	
Missing	System	3	6.1		
Total		49	100.0		

A considerable 39% describe conversations as meaningful, while a majority describe them as casual (57%). A limited proportion (22%) describe conversations as centered around dogs.

Table 132. Meaningful, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	19	38.8	42.2	42.2
	No	20	40.8	44.4	86.7
	Sometimes	6	12.2	13.3	100.0
	Total	45	91.8	100.0	
Missing	System	4	8.2		
Total		49	100.0		

As one participant explains, “I think people are more likely to talk when their dog is around, so I typically have great conversations with people here.” Another explains a similar phenomenon, explaining people “open up more in dog park than other public spaces.” One describes deep conversations and explains “I tend to develop good relationships with those individuals.” These indications of openness and acceptance, though limited, are indicative of the conversation of third places (Oldenburg, 1989).

Table 133. Casual, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	28	57.1	93.3	93.3
	Sometimes	2	4.1	6.7	100.0
	Total	30	61.2	100.0	
Missing	System	19	38.8		
Total		49	100.0		

Table 134. Dog-centered, Wagging Tail Dog Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	11	22.4	78.6	78.6
	Sometimes	3	6.1	21.4	100.0
	Total	14	28.6	100.0	
Missing	System	35	71.4		
Total		49	100.0		

Summary and conclusions of interview data. Dramatic contextual differences between the New Urban and suburban neighborhoods support two different social environments. While users of all three parks note convenience and/or proximity relative to their choice for transportation, a majority of suburbanites drive to the park, and New Urban users report walking. The presence of the off-leash areas allows a convenient place where dog park users can enjoy the ease of exercising their dogs hands free. Additionally, a majority of participants who report choosing to walk to the New Urban parks because they are close to their homes and because they enjoy walking their dogs is indicative of the walkable and convenient environment

Oldenburg (1989) describes as supportive of the third place. Bosque Park users are drawn by this convenience and the park's natural qualities, yet as self-described introverts, they are less motivated by and experience considerably fewer repeat encounters than users of the dog parks.

Similarly, moderate tendencies for Wagging Tail users to be drawn to the park's natural features and to describe themselves as introverts may indicate suburban park users are proportionately less interested in interacting with other park users. Users of both dog parks are more likely to note a relaxation associated with dogs and are most often drawn to the parks for the off-leash areas in support of their dogs. Yet Wagging Tail participants relate more strongly to their dogs as an influence over interaction, revealing moderate positive and negative influences on interaction due to certain dog types, and they are slightly more likely to describe watching the dogs as therapeutic.

A majority of users of all three parks describe chatting while in the park. Dog park users, however, have a greater tendency to experience conversations that are meaningful despite higher proportions of suburban park users compared to New Urban dog park users who describe themselves as introverts. In fact, conversations within the two dog parks are comparable in terms of reciprocity, support and meaning. Limited proportions who link sense of community to supportive relationships are supported by interview responses indicating a closely-knit neighborhood. "We all live close. We want to make sure we take care of each other." Another participant explains, "[w]e have become friends and will help each other with our dogs if needed". Limited data may indicate that New Urban dog park conversations, twice as often described as intense or intimate, may reflect reported stronger ties amongst New Urban park users. These proportions are limited, however and considered insignificant.

Generally less interested in seeing people they know in the park, Bosque Park users have a greater tendency to report casual, cursory greetings. Yet moderate proportions of Bosque participants meet up together at neighborhood destinations, while even higher rates of socializing occur amongst Spruill Dog Park users in the New Urban neighborhood. The presence of moderately higher rates of socializing amongst New Urban compared to suburban dog park users suggests neighborhood influences may support repeat encounters that carry over into different settings in the neighborhood. Yet for suburban users, the strong presence of third place activity is circumscribed to the park. They tend to keep their “dog park friends” separate from the rest of their lives, with only a slight proportion reporting socializing with other park users outside the park. A tendency related to higher reported use of neighborhood establishments for outside socializing and significantly more walking for both New Urban parks supports a casual, walkable environment as described by Oldenburg (1989) and the presence of stronger ties within the New Urban community. This data lends an understanding to observations of New Urban dog park users who came to the park alone but left in groups. One interview was even cut short so a participant could meet a group of park users at a nearby restaurant. As one New Urban respondent explains, a group of park users usually meet up on Sundays at the dog park and walk together to a nearby restaurant. Another comment explains the coordination. “Dinner, group text, take our dogs for walks, celebrate birthdays together.” During busy park hours, electronic devices appear less of a distraction and more a means of keeping Spruill Park users connected.

In Bosque interview descriptions of “people that meet up”, “local food establishments with regulars,” and residents who interact with business owners, one can hear hints of the active

neighborhood described by limited participants when trying to express their sense of community. Park users may engage in short-lived conversation in Bosque Park, but they tend not to linger there long. Some may cross quiet Morris Street to see who is at the café. Others will look forward to seeing who is at Spruill Dog Park and may walk somewhere after the dogs play to gather for a meal. Yet Bosque Park remains a common destination within a neighborhood of regulars where the closely knit New Urban neighborhood connects people to common amenities and public spaces that draw them outside. It sells them cups of coffee and newspapers and provides a place to easily meet without loading up the dogs for a drive. Moderate Bosque Park responses and considerable New Urban dog park responses indicating people meet up and visit each other in the neighborhood clarifies observations that repeat interaction is not limited to that between profit-motivated store owners and patrons.

Yet similar to Wagging Tail users, those who drive to the New Urban parks do not report socializing outside the parks with other users. People who came in separate cars leave also in separate cars. When regulars return, they are excited with anticipation about who will be there. They pick up on previous conversations as regulars warmly welcome them into ongoing dialogues, assisted by their dogs. In fact, users of each dog park report a stronger sense of community with the park than with their neighborhood, especially for suburban participants. Drawn to the regular crowd and a common interest in their dogs and the park, moderately weaker sense of community in the suburban neighborhood indicates some participants may fail to connect in their community. One exception may be apartment dwellers, as indicated in limited interviews, which link sense of community to apartment get-togethers, visiting neighbors and community events. These limited responses support data obtained during the survey of

neighborhood friendliness which indicates a greater tendency for apartment dwellers to be out in their neighborhood and more accessible to their neighbors.

Chapter 7: Dog parks and third place: Data interpretation.

This section considers the various themes and potential influences that emerged from the research data, while analyzing these themes in relation to third place criteria, as established by Oldenburg (1989). This examination is followed by a narrative that explains the conclusions drawn from the analysis.

A myriad of influences. Oldenburg explains key elements of an effective third place. The most basic of these is the presence of a neutral ground. *There must be places where individuals may come and go as they please, in which none are required to play host, and in which all feel at home and comfortable* (Oldenburg, 1989, p. 22). By their very nature, public parks reflect the absence of financial costs, oversight, and age restrictions, while welcoming different types of people together repeatedly on their own terms. Similar to formal organizations, which draw similar interests, yet without the common focus on conventional status or pretension, dog parks, in their inclusivity, support leveling, a characteristic also supported by their low-key nature. As Oldenburg (1989) explains, third places are neither elegant nor advertised. *Not having that shiny bright appearance of the franchise establishment, third places do not attract a high volume of strangers or transient customers* (Oldenburg, 1989, p. 36).

Though a small insignificant number of participants criticize Wagging Tail Dog Park for its lack of ground cover, which can discourage use, as confirmed by one Spruill participant, the park's dedicated following of regulars do not appear to mind. One New Urban dog park user notes, "It's a place that is very down-to-earth." In a similar way, Bosque Park's plain ground cover of mulch and gravel, possibly linked to comfort, may support the descriptions of the park by interviewees as "cozy" and "peaceful". As Oldenburg (1989) stipulates, *[t]he third place is remarkably similar*

to a good home in the psychological comfort and support that it extends (Oldenburg, 1989, p. 42). Unlike Bosque Park, where trips end quickly, assisting a return to what is routine, dog park users relax and look forward to seeing familiar dogs and friends. Though the canines can sometimes contribute to disruptions in the social balance, with proper rules and oversight, dogs tend to support a sense of comfort and a positive presence in the parks amidst secure fencing, which may support a psychological comfort characteristic of the third place.

Oldenburg discusses the importance of context in describing the casual environment, where people *bump into friends; they receive daily doses of novelty, diversion and social support* (Oldenburg, 1989, p. 289). The influence of park infrastructure was seen at Wagging Tail. Similar to the workplace, where people gather around the drinking fountain, at the suburban park, in an act of human kindness, park users habitually filled water bowls, allowing easier access to water for all the dogs. In this case, a shared human responsibility benefited not only dogs, but other humans, resulting in socially supportive behavior and a sense of unity amongst park regulars. Supportive conversation was confirmed in all three parks surrounding the presence of dogs. In suburban Wagging Tail, where users were observed as remaining in the park for longer periods, support took on action through dog training for dog park friends who have similar dogs. Observations indicating the New Urban context may support an extension of socially supportive actions into the neighborhood through pet sitting was not confirmed in the interviews.

As Oldenburg (1989) teaches, *[n]othing more clearly indicates a third place than that the talk there is good; that it is lively, scintillating, colorful, and engaging* (Oldenburg, 1989, p. 29). Influences within the parks that encourage conversation are important to third place activity. The influence of dogs on interaction endured within the different park settings. Yet the dogs may

work within park and neighborhood infrastructure to support interaction in different ways. At New Urban Spruill Park, the intersection of walkways and fencing was observed as influencing conversation amongst people. Though some interviews allude to observations that dogs commonly instigate conversations at non-dog Bosque Park, it was the intersection of seating and paths that were observed as bringing seated park users near enough to speak to those walking dogs. In the parks, seating may also comfort and support longer stays. Though a site analysis reveals centrally located seating may play a role in shaping interaction by bringing people together repeatedly, this could not be confirmed in interviews.

Oldenburg writes of a ***bottled-up quality, which lacks outward conventions for breaking the ice*** (Oldenburg, 1989, p. 170). He also writes of the common use of social stimulants or lubricants, like coffee or alcohol, to reduce inhibitions in the third place. Without such devices, dogs were confirmed as stimulating conversation and observed as inspiring supportive behavior, while functioning similar to a third place regular by welcoming people into conversation. This tendency may potentially be attributable to an enhanced sense of trust (Beetz, et al., 2012), which according to Oldenburg (1989) makes regular visits important by strengthening the acceptance of other regulars. Dogs may be a needed link in disjointed environments. Though unaccounted for in Oldenburg's literature on third place, considerable Wagging Tail users note the dogs relax them. Limited participants from all three parks describe conversations as revolving around dogs, while a majority note a tendency to speak to people accompanied by dogs.

The urge to return, recreate, and recapture the experience is there (Oldenburg, 1989, p. 38). A higher percentage of Bosque users who describe themselves as introverts may negatively affect this urge, as indicated in interviews reporting a majority of Bosque users are unmotivated

by repeat encounters. Data indicating proportionally more introverts who, when given the option, choose to frequent Bosque Park and as observed, stay only a brief time, also supports the notion that Bosque trips tend to be more utilitarian in nature. Its location fits conveniently into the routines of fathers pushing strollers, people walking dogs, or those who may pop out occasionally to have a smoke or place a call. Many users may not have time to linger and enjoy the peaceful setting, but those who time it right may run into a neighbor and talk briefly. The majority, however, not recognizing anyone, will depart in less than ten minutes in order to maintain a busy schedule, get the dog walked and get on with their day. Data indicating Bosque Park users do not experience repeat encounters as often as dog park users may also support existing research signifying utilitarian walking is not linked to increased interaction. Observed tendencies to remain in the neighborhood dog park for longer periods and to be involved in lively conversation is more consistent with third place behavior than the non-dog park, where the urge to recreate is observed as weak and often absent.

The mood is playful. Here joy and acceptance reign over anxiety and alienation (Oldenburg, 1989, p. 38). Attitudes surrounding canine users of the dog parks are confirmed as supporting a relaxed mood and light conversation. Though the context of New Urban Spruill does not restrict dogs by breed, like many other apartments, both dog parks offer comparable levels of control over dogs through separation, and combined with a common respect for dog park etiquette, park infrastructure was observed as supporting a positive environment, while cultural values were confirmed as respectful and tolerant of different types of dogs, including dogs commonly stereotyped as aggressive. Yet the occasional incident of dog aggression can be potentially devastating for individual owners of certain aggressive dogs. And though dog

aggression may restrict park neutrality and limit the comfort of some, potentially hindering the parks' functionality as a third place, disruptions in the social balance are rare, as supported by typical participants of all three parks, who profess dog breed and size do not influence their interaction with other users. Despite an absence of such issues at Bosque Park, where a leash is required, notable proportions of park users drawn to the dog parks due to the absence of such requirement, report an urge to return to the parks repeatedly.

Nevertheless, people were observed in all three parks during inclement weather and extreme cold, suggesting a strong motivation to use the parks. Yet, unlike Bosque Park, where users hurried trips during cold and inclement weather, dog park participants, reportedly motivated by repeat encounters, were observed continuing to engage for long periods, thus taking on the spirit of third place. As Oldenburg explains, ***[t]hird place conversation is typically engrossing. Consciousness of conditions and time often slips away amid its lively flow (Oldenburg, 1989, p. 30).*** This quality was evident, as temperatures had to drop to the 20s before park use fell significantly, and even then, several faithful users showed up, observed huddling in small groups talking, while refusing to allow the cold to interfere.

It is the regulars who give the third place its character and who assure that on any given visit, some of the gang will be there (Oldenburg, 1989, p. 33-34). Owners of herding dogs found playing fetch every afternoon at Spruill and groups huddled at Wagging Tail in the cold attest to some of the influences dog parks have on supporting repeat encounters, compared to the non-dog park. Dogs themselves, were observed as functioning similar to human regulars, welcoming others into conversation. As Oldenburg writes, a third place should not attract transients, but people who are already friends, while encouraging friendship. The greater regularity and variety

of people present at the end of day was observed as helping New Urban users to overcome the barriers of dispersed seating and the isolation of suburban regulars in a neighborhood with a reported lack of community where neighbors don't get out. Because the suburban dog park is a convenient drive for participants who report being drawn repeatedly, typical users see regulars and get to know them. The New Urban environment supports repeat encounters as well, and the diversity of destinations in the neighborhood provides convenient places to get to know acquaintances who they meet in the parks.

For repeat visits to occur, the third place must be convenient. ***Access to them must be easy if they are to survive and serve, and the ease with which one may visit a third place is a matter of both time and location*** (Oldenburg, 1989, p. 32). Users of each park note convenience as a factor in getting them there, including Bosque users, who walk due to its proximity and the convenience of clean-up facilities. The New Urban neighborhood is a casual place to walk pets, especially considering most businesses allow dogs onto patios. Reportedly an energy release from multi-family spaces, a break for cramped apartment dwellers near Spruill Park is a matter of stepping out into an active neighborhood, relieved of the burden of loading up dogs.

Accessible during the on and off hours, ***the third place accommodates people only when they are released from their responsibilities elsewhere*** (Oldenburg, 1989, p. 32). ***Regulars of third places do not go home and dress up. Rather, they come as they are.*** (Oldenburg, 1989, p. 37). Though some may not always feel particularly social at the end of the workday, as one participant explained, users of all three parks were observed dropping in when schedules allow, affecting the predictability of repeat encounters and the diversity of people present. While users during the off hours may not experience the predictability or see regulars repeatedly show up at

the same time, Oldenburg (1989) ascribes a certain spontaneity and anticipation of not knowing who will be at the neighborhood gathering spot. In fact, some New Urban residents can see who is in the park or heading near it from their apartment windows, potentially supporting the anticipation Oldenburg describes. As one midday user of Spruill Park states, “When I see a dog owner outside my window that I know, I will go and join.” Though this evidence is limited to only one user, dog park users may experience an eagerness to see friends in a similar way as described by Oldenburg (1989), as heard in enthusiastic voices and seen in expressions of users of both dogs parks as they picked up on conversations where they left off.

Oldenburg (1989) relates such casual, convenience to walkability. ***Third places thrive best in locales where community life is casual, he explains, where walking takes people to more destinations than does the automobile, and where the interesting diversity of the neighborhood reduces one’s reliance on television*** (Oldenburg, 1989, p 210). Though a majority of New Urban participants note proximity or convenience as a reason for walking to the parks, a sense of safety may play an underlying role. As Oldenburg (1989) sets out, third places function well in a casual environment, where the streets are safe and invite human connection. As one participant accompanying his daughter explains, while comparing the neighborhood to his own, “It feels like it’s farther away from the cars.” Another states, “It’s Addison and everyone just chills. I think it’s because we feel safe.”

Similar to the casual environment Oldenburg describes, the destinations in the New Urban neighborhood work together with the stability of familiar faces to support repeat encounters and the potential for friendship formation. One participant states, “I see the same people often here (park), restaurants and coffee shop.” Though people appear generally

receptive to conversation, as indicated by the survey of neighborhood friendliness, residence within the New Urban neighborhood may support a different level of enthusiasm. This is illustrated by one Bosque Park participant, who describes seeing a neighbor in the park and walking together to a nearby restaurant. “If I see someone and get to know them, it’s worth it because they live close.” As Oldenburg explains, *[i]n the strollways of a casual environment, much of what one needs and enjoys in life comes easily and incidentally* (Oldenburg, 1989, p. 289). Limited Bosque participants link their sense of community to neighborhood destinations while moderate respondents report experiencing repeat encounters in the park. This reinforces Bosque Park as a place of short-lived and more rare conversation, a state uncharacteristic of the third place. Yet meaningful interaction is evident, as a moderate 26% of Bosque participants report meeting up with other park users, primarily at neighborhood destinations. Familiarity of patronage in the neighborhood is also evidenced by a significant proportion of Spruill Park users who, as confirmed, live near enough to walk and who also report meeting up with and visiting other park users at neighborhood establishments.

Of those participants who report socializing with other users outside the New Urban park[s], a considerable proportion report neighborhood activity and a sense of sharing something in common, such as age or amenities, contributes to their sense of community. These expressions relate to *the feeling of being apart together in an exceptional situation, of sharing something important* (Oldenburg, 1989, p. 38). While users of all three parks note a sense of park community, considerably fewer suburban park users report a sense of community for their neighborhoods. While a majority express a sense of community, limited Bosque Park users’ show a weakness in their reliance on a programmed sense of community related to organized events,

while only moderate users express a common bond with their community. As a park frequented by introverts, Bosque Park may help users to feel a part of their community, though their sense of community is slightly more focused on the neighborhood than the park itself. This contrasts both dog parks, where community is much more focused on the dog park in comparison to the neighborhood. This tendency is evident in the suburban neighborhood, where users tend not to express a sense of common purpose except for their shared use of the dog park. Though very few visit or socialize outside the park with fellow dog park users, limited Wagging Tail users report visiting neighbors and taking part in get-togethers and apartment community events. This tendency may be attributable to organized events, a proximity of living quarters, or a higher tendency for apartment dwellers to be out in their neighborhood as observed in the survey of neighborhood friendliness.

The following tables organize data revealed during the research. The table was useful as a tool to assist analysis of the three parks in relation to third-place criteria.

Table 135: Relative third place characteristics

Oldenburg (1986) Third place physical Characteristics	Key words	Related to questions	Observations	Social / physical
Neutral ground: People come and go as they please. No one is required to play host. People feel at home and comfortable. Supports leveling.	At home comfortable leveling casual environment	1c features relaxation 2b dog type	site documentation; patterns/routines; schedules/daylight; Avoidance due to aggression; no economic restriction; no park oversight.	physical and social
Activity is unstructured but with spontaneous	Departure form routine anticipation	1a frequency 1b distance and why	Patterns/ routines;	social

Oldenburg (1986) Third place physical Characteristics	Key words	Related to questions	Observations	Social / physical
regularity and inconsistency resulting in anticipation.	unstructured.		presence or absence of scheduled visits.	
Compared to formal organizations, third places tend to be inclusive; Conventional status counts for little;	Inclusive leveler with common interests	2b dog type 6 reciprocal	site documentation; group activity	social
Near homes of regulars; come as you are; convenience relates to time and location; frequency due to accessibility;	casual due to convenience/ proximity ease of visiting time location accessibility	1a frequency of visits 1b distance from park 2 frequency of encounters 2c motivated by repeats	site documentation walking/driving	Physical; social
Appeal fades when inconvenient; won't know patrons;	convenience affects repeat encounters	1b distance 2 frequency of repeats 2c motivated by repeats	walking/driving use of names	physical social
Open during on/off hours after mandatory appearances part of routine	Accessible on/off hours fits the routine come as you are	1a frequency 1b distance 2b frequency of repeats	site documentation, hours of operation and patterns/time of use	physical social
Plain/unimpressive low key; unadvertised; worn/ prevents transients	low key unadvertised unlike franchises	1c features encourage use	site documentation, patterns of activity	physical
Feeling apart together; sharing something; mutual withdrawal; mutual concerns	feeling apart together rejecting norms	5 sense park comm 5a neighborhood 6 conversations	socially supportive behavior	social
Stays longer than intended;	hate to leave urge to return	3 social behavior	cold, rain	social

Oldenburg (1986) Third place physical Characteristics	Key words	Related to questions	Observations	Social / physical
retains magic; urge to return, recreate, and recapture experience; consciousness of conditions and time slips away		2c motivated by repeats	talking, staying longer; observed repeat visitors;	
Sense of possession; control without intrusion; leaving one's mark; psychological comfort and support; mutual concerns	Ownership at-homeness	1c features relax 2 with dog 2b dog type 2c motivated by repeats 5 park comm 5a neighborhood 6 conversation	regulars speaking loudly to be inclusive people asking others to clean up after pets	social
Joy and acceptance reign; leveling/acceptance; conventional status counts for little	social equality acceptance anxiety alienation	4 introversion 2 frequency repeats 2b with dog 5 sense park comm 5a sense community 6 conversation	site documentation, observations of laughter at dogs diversity of conversations	social
Engaging beyond purpose, duty, or role; be themselves;	pure sociability	1c features relax; 2c with dog/ 2c motivated by repeats;	enthusiasm; laughter sense of relief after five; relaxed appearance/dress relaxed appearance/dress	social
Conversation is the main activity; mixing; less inhibited;	lively and engaging	6 conversation;	conversation continues despite cold/shivering laughter talking in groups	social
Problems set aside;	Upbeat	6 conversation;	absence of anger	social

Oldenburg (1986) Third place physical Characteristics	Key words	Related to questions	Observations	Social / physical
temper is upbeat	Cheerful	2b dog type;	lively conversation laughter	
Right people make it come alive; Assured of acquaintances; Hard core of regulars	constant acquaintances regulars	1a frequency; 2 frequency repeats; 2c motivated by repeats; 5 sense of park comm	Recognition repeat visitors greeting each other	social
Rules of conversation; Refrain from dominating; Gemutlichkeit carries an obligation of helping others feel at home; Call out across crowd	regulars speaking over the crowd inclusivity call out across the crowd regulars take ownership	6 conversations;	regulars speaking loudly to engage others outside the conversation; projecting voices;	social
Trust and acceptance encourages conversation; More likely to speak to people they recognize as regulars, making repeat visits and encounters important to acceptance;	Trust Acceptance	2 repeat encounters 2a with dog 2b dog type 2c motivated by repeats	freely speaking to others; encouraged by those with dogs;	social
People move about the space sampling the	find people who clique	6 conversation	observed mixing	social
Must regularly attract people who are already friends; Must successfully encourage friendship; not transients;	Friends friendship formation transients	3 chatting, meeting, social media, visiting	Recognition lively conversation leaving together	social physical

Oldenburg (1986) Third place physical Characteristics	Key words	Related to questions	Observations	Social / physical
Making friends is convenient;				
Social lubricants	Break the ice	6 conversations dog centered	Seating encouraged people to sit together	Social
Not hostile to lingering People not turned away due to lack of consumption; people are individuals	Not commercial	6 features relax	Site documentation No economic cost No oversight	Physical social
Casual community life; streets are safe and invite human connection;	Walking Safety	1a frequency 1b distance 2c motivated by repeats	Walking/driving recognition	Physical

Data analysis and interpretation conclusions. In the two dog parks, particularly in the evenings as people set obligations aside, the character of third place is evident in the warm, reciprocal atmosphere and as confirmed in considerable reports of meaningful conversation. Each dog park alludes to a psychological release and a homelike sense of comfort, yet provides an escape from the routine of home, which carries obligations. This may explain why sense of community is stronger in the dog parks than in each respective community. It seems each dog park forms a small community in and of itself, centered around regulars that define its character, yet modulated within certain contexts. For the New Urban dog park users of this study, sense of community involved common bonds related to neighborhood, yet for suburban park users, this bond involves their dogs. [Dogs were more influential for suburban park users who were more likely to describe watching the dogs as relaxing or therapeutic and more likely to note a positive influence on interaction due to certain dog types on their behavior.]

Those who are more introverted within the New Urban neighborhood often choose Bosque Park, which draws in sufficient activity to create interest and instigate socially supportive and casual conversation. Yet due to a lack of fencing to fully enclose the park, the non-dog park space, with an observed dominance of utilitarian activity, fails to promote a common urge to recreate or linger and thus fails to support repeat encounters.

Wagging Tail supports time together for families, more present in the suburban community, while supporting time away from the routine of home, as characteristic of third place. As prescribed by Oldenburg (1989), the dog park offers a neutral place to unwind where regulars can avoid the social isolation of their neighborhoods. Yet the social interaction that occurs in the suburban dog park remains localized to the park itself. Not having the advantage of centralized seating, Spruill Park's disadvantage may be counterbalanced by the familiarity of patronage drawn primarily from within walking distance of the popular neighborhood destination.

Moreover, Spruill Park responses allude to a sense of community that is more centered around the naturally forming social groups within the dog park, which contrasts Bosque Park, where limited users rely on publicly planned events for their sense of community. Though fewer repeat encounters are supported in Bosque Park, the neighborhood context supports casual interaction through common leisure destinations, as evidenced by moderate users who socialize together in the neighborhood. Such activity supports a greater diversity of ties, important to the physical and psychological health of people living in the New Urban community. This may contribute to the stronger reported sense of community for New Urban residents compared to suburban residents. While planned events in the neighborhood draw people outside within

common public spaces and promote business activity, walkability appears a strong influence on social behavior, as those who report walking to the parks are significantly more likely to socialize outside the park, while those who drive tend not to report such activity. Further, limited signs indicate that those who live in the community may potentially be more readily accepted into the park culture due to the convenience of their homes nearby and their continued presence in the neighborhood. As one Bosque Park user states, “[i]f I see someone and get to know them, it’s worth it because they live close.”

Chapter 8: Findings and conclusions, limitations and implications

This chapter provides a summary of findings and conclusions drawn from the research. This summary is followed by a statement of research limitations and concludes with an account of research implications.

Findings and conclusions. People increasingly look to technology for interaction and entertainment, indicating an unhealthy state and weakened sociability. With people of all ages increasingly living alone, the realms of home, work and leisure are blurred, and leisure time is often spent in isolation. Though the convenience of digital interaction can strengthen accessibility, while assisting connection in the right setting, it cannot replace the physiological benefits of human connection, nor offer the diversity found in the casual third place that Oldenburg describes.

In all cases, the presence of a dog plays a role in bringing people together, as an extension of their owners, as a regular and as a social lubricant. Though a dog's influence is not always positive, they tend to support a playful atmosphere amongst people who love them, while encouraging a common purpose and a diversity of information for their owners to share. Given the right environment, the dogs can be effective in supporting the sociability of their humans, even influencing who they interact with and the potential friendships that may form. If dogs are skilled at bringing people together, their influence works within micro-level design factors and neighborhood context to influence potential relationships.

The two communities, grounded in the dog parks and supported by dogs, allow connection in either context, resulting in an active third-place setting. Yet a line runs between the two neighborhoods, supporting two different social environments. One is walkable with

convenient places to gather. One is drivable where people are isolated. Each dog park supports a different spirit, and each forms a small community centered on pets and bonds related to a common use of the park. These bonds, interaction, and sense of community, however, remain stagnant within the suburban park setting and fail to extend into the surrounding neighborhood. The stronger sense of community centered around each dog park only carries over to the New Urban neighborhood, with moderately higher levels of sense of community than the suburban. Since the car-oriented culture requires an automobile to access the suburban dog park, the park's culture and social activity remain internal and circumscribed to the park.

While all three parks support a neutral ground, the dog parks are potentially more supportive of relaxation for dog owners, inviting longer stays, surrounded by fencing, which allows comfort in knowing the dogs are secure. Limited data indicates the non-dog park may support a weaker, more programmed sense of community. In this less grounded urban space, the dogs may help to fill a need for those who don't feel a part of the community. Yet without the benefit of more extended visits, as in the dog parks, the traditional park space may do less to support its users, potentially leaving those without a pet feeling left out. The freedom afforded by the dog parks to support dogs off leash allows conversation to dominate, as mixing brings the like-minded together, and leveling allows people to relax and shed work personas. Drawn by these off-leash areas and by familiar people, conversations reported as reciprocal may indicate a general acceptance and openness to conversation in the park, where a blending occurs that can help people surpass barriers and isolation often present in a modern environment.

New Urban park users who walk to the parks are significantly more likely to visit other park users or meet up outside the parks. This indicates the presence of stronger ties surrounding

the dog parks, which function uniquely to support a strong third place environment. The dog park helps bring neighbors together and supports a greater diversity of ties within the New Urban community relative to the convenience of walkable leisure destinations and proximate homes. Though a demographic analysis indicates lower economic capacity among suburban participants, a lack of appealing places to walk may be more detrimental to interaction, keeping suburbanites within their homes and reducing their accessibility to neighbors, as indicated by participants who did not report a sense of community in the suburban neighborhood. And though the presence of dogs may increase encounters at all the parks and support potential friendships, due to variations in relationships experienced in the three settings, it appears that a casual, convenient and walkable environment may be more influential in affecting the form of relationships that potentially develop.

Suburban dog park users can find meaningful interaction, but they appear to keep their dog park friends at a distance. Such distance can be healthy, and it is the nature of the third place to insulate, yet third places thrive where every day needs are casually met, where businesses are comfortably approachable on foot, and where just enough people live within close quarters, connected by neutral gathering places. Bosque Park is just one of several easily accessible destinations in the traditionally casual urban environment, where functioning effectively is less eventful. Different types of walking affect interaction in Bosque Park. Those walking briskly in the midst of utilitarian tasks tend not to interact with others, while those enjoying the scenery may converse in passing, especially to those accompanied by a dog and given an excuse to speak.

Though a majority of interviews indicate dog park users love dogs impartially, moderate data indicates dog breed can have subtle influences affecting which park users interact, while

diminishing neutrality for some due to dog aggression and conflicts. Limited data through observations indicate electronic devices, which could potentially disrupt interaction, were not prevalent during high dog park use. This indicates exercising and playing with dogs can cause people to stop and look around and involve themselves in face-to-face copresence and as characteristic of the third place, is engaging enough to separate people from their everyday routines, smart phones and IT gadgets.

While each dog park gives users a sense of community relative to the park itself, the New Urban neighborhood and parks support a shared community experience and diversity of ties absent in the suburban neighborhood. The dog park, where acquaintances are made and friendships are formed, is uniquely capable of supporting the wellbeing of canines as members of the family, offering relief for pets and pet owners alike. They encourage people to discard passive imitations of life to take part actively, and they support the exchange of information through face-to-face interaction, often absent in a world with little time and dominated by electronic communication. The dog park, either in a New Urban or traditional suburban context, translates into third place encounters, to which researchers and urbanists have given little attention. These gathering places should be pursued more often, as the Trust for Public Lands policies and park scores encourage (Trust for Public Lands, n.d.). Bowling alone nostalgia must shift gaze to implications for developers and cities to adopt standards for dog parks for certain proportions of homes in neighborhoods or districts. A pet friendly neighborhood, an ostensible marketing edge for the developer, can importantly support sociability among neighbors, a diversity of ties and potentially stronger levels of social support. This may assist a more balanced family life and social life and a groundedness often absent in communities.

Research limitations.

The study was limited to adults and was thus unable to address differences in dog park value due to juvenescence. Given time restrictions and the limits of a predetermined set of interview questions, the ability of the researcher to delve deeper into certain themes also limited the scope and level of inquiry. Generalizability about the effects of the two neighborhoods is limited as well. New Urbanism, like suburbanism, comes in many forms, and the study's general applicability is therefore constrained due to the unique nature of these two varying urban contexts as well as differences in regional and national cultural and development trends.

Social exchanges were largely based on observation, which, despite the most objective notetaking, were subject to error, misinterpretation and/or inevitable researcher bias. Though interviews were relied upon to help confirm such observations and assess behavior and motivations, variability in individual interpretation of terms could potentially obscure intended meanings. Though open-ended questions sought to uncover participant thoughts to the fullest extent possible, data limited to the accuracy of self-reporting may also be restrictive due to concerns about norms and political correctness. For example, a growing emphasis on acceptance of mixed breeds, rescues and canines often stereotyped as aggressive may conceal underlying meanings. As Graham and Glover (2014, p. 229) note, citing a Canadian participant: "A lot of owners love the sound of the word rescue dog and most people will happily boast that their dog is a rescue. I don't think it's fair to judge me for not knowing any better with my current dog." Further inquiry and more detailed review of issues surrounding dog breed and behavior may therefore benefit future research and offer a better understanding of the influence of a diversity of dogs on human interaction. Similarly, a lack of awareness may affect self-reporting. People

going through the motions of maintaining schedules and taking care of the everyday needs of their dogs may fail to notice enjoyment associated with people, dogs, and their environment.

Additionally, researcher was unable to account for self-selection or tendencies of those who may choose certain neighborhoods based on their ability to support dog ownership, leisure walking and related sociability. Observations limited to the confines of the parks also hampered an understanding of participant relationships with their environment. Though limited remarks made during observations and interviews indicate socially supportive behavior may extend into the New Urban community surrounding the dog park, a more detailed inquiry into such behavior may have supported a greater understanding of the dynamics of interaction occurring within the parks. And though a site analysis revealed some information about neighborhood destinations, a more extensive inquiry into specific characteristics of destinations utilized by participants may have contributed insight into decisions about the use of such destinations, which could strengthen neighborhood activity and interaction within different neighborhoods.

Specific characteristics of urban form can also be difficult to correlate with behavior. Though the presence or absence of walking served as proxy for walkability, additional research and measures are suggested to explore the distances of different destinations within varying neighborhood types where people are willing to walk. Measures of connectivity and specific ratios of use may support a better understanding of the effectiveness of retail pedestrian orientation and its relationship to leisure and utilitarian walking. Though public transit was available to the entire area, a better understanding of ridership would also lend to the understanding of transportation practices within the two neighborhoods. And though some comments regarding sense of safety were captured in interview responses, more inquiry related

to sense of safety would support a better understanding of the complex relationships between safety, neighborhood walkability, social interaction and sense of community.

Research implications.

This research complements and supports existing literature related to the power of parks near homes to increase strolling and leisure-related walking to increase and enhance social interaction. This research indicates that the presence of parks near homes can support interaction above and beyond casual greetings, especially within a New Urban context, where the presence of durable relationships and convenience can strengthen human ties. The research also backs existing literature which notes the social lubricative effects of dogs and links dog parks with the effective third place. It relates increased socially-supportive human interaction to the dog park setting and a New Urban park setting, while suggesting that socially supportive actions may extend into the surrounding community amidst the convenience of a New Urban context, given increases in a diversity of ties and Existing literature which iterates that concentrated, centralized seating and dogs can support human interaction within dog park settings is also supported.

Similar to Tissot (2011), this study found demographic differences were not observed as a strong influence on interaction. Though many participants were observed as Caucasian and middle-class, the strong presence of leveling in the dog parks suggests further study to support the formation of relationships amongst a diversity of people and the integration of marginalized groups.

Considering the health benefits of increased exercise, construction of dog parks as gathering places should be pursued more often, just as the Trust for Public Lands policies and

park scores encourage (Trust for Public Lands, n.d.). It is worth the time of developers and cities to include dog parks as a prerequisite to new neighborhood design. Doing so would potentially support reductions in loose and uncontrolled dogs, reduce behavioral problems due to increased canine exercise and mental stimulation (Hallstrom, 2013) and potentially affect local leash laws.

The research suggests further study to better understand the different forms of social support related to dog ownership, and related implications for enhanced neighborhood activity, sense of safety and community, increased interaction and information sharing. Further study considering increasing population densities, the scarcity of urban green space, and increasing rates of dog ownership and new standards to support dog parks for certain proportions of homes in neighborhoods or districts.

This research can improve awareness of government officials and support a greater understanding and strengthened policies for planners and design professionals related to the influence of physical and social activity within different neighborhood contexts. Considering that dog-supportive infrastructure can support exercise, enhance neighborhood activity, discourage crime, support human health and reduce public healthcare costs, the research can also guide design and land-use policies to more effectively support public health and welfare through population health strategies aimed at increasing the amount of walking, while providing guidance for healthcare professionals. These results may also support landscape designers, park administrators and city officials through the creation of a dog park topology that includes centrally located inward-facing seating to support human interaction, a heavy tree canopy to support shade and posted rules to support positive third-place activity. Information related to

health benefits associated with such a topology could then assist hospitals planning and programming for re-cooperative facilities.

Since a large proportion of people own dogs, and demand for dog parks is strong, the potential health and cultural benefits for the dog park as a third place is significant. While a pet friendly neighborhood is good marketing for the developer, the presence of parks may also help compensate for shrinking backyards, encourage walking, support community programming and management, while supporting sociability amongst neighbors. These trends then may pull back use of electronic devices for entertainment by encouraging people to reduce reliance on electronic devices to support healthier, more active and purpose-filled lives.

This research may have implications for other developments that could potentially function similar to the dog park and much like the dog park, function as a place of enhanced social interaction without reliance on chemical stimulants and lubricants. The dog, as a mechanism of enhanced interaction can be applied to a number of settings to support human health. The research may also be applied to playgrounds and other park spaces, where an interest in children bring people together to support third-place activity in a similar way. Given reduced social interaction for children and people of all ages during the current pandemic, this research may help to overcome potential deficiencies in emotional learning and other unknown potential consequences of drastically reduced social interaction due to the current pandemic.

Given increasing numbers of people isolated in quarantine, demand for canines has increased dramatically. Recent surges in pet sales, which began in mid-March of 2020, have continued since the beginning of the pandemic, with current demand exceeding supplies (Kavin, 2020). Increasing pet-related expenditures surely indicate a hunger for companionship stronger

than ever, a pattern suggesting dogs, increasingly considered as family, are filling in and providing social support otherwise lacking. This means substantially greater need for dog parks within American neighborhoods. Even given a return to a more normal state, needs for social gathering places and standards to accommodate them in individual neighborhoods may be accentuated if current patterns of working from home and increases in dog ownership continue.

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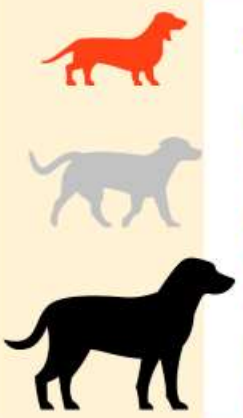
Appendix

- ◇ 10 minutes or less
- ◓ 10-20 minutes
- 30 minutes or more
- ▷ Destination trip
- ↔ Casual communication
- ⌚ Lively conversation
- ★ Recognition
- Standing
- Sitting
- Throwing ball or disk
- Using cell phone
- 🚬 Smoking
- 👶 Baby in carriage
- 🚶 Child walking
- 🍔 Eating

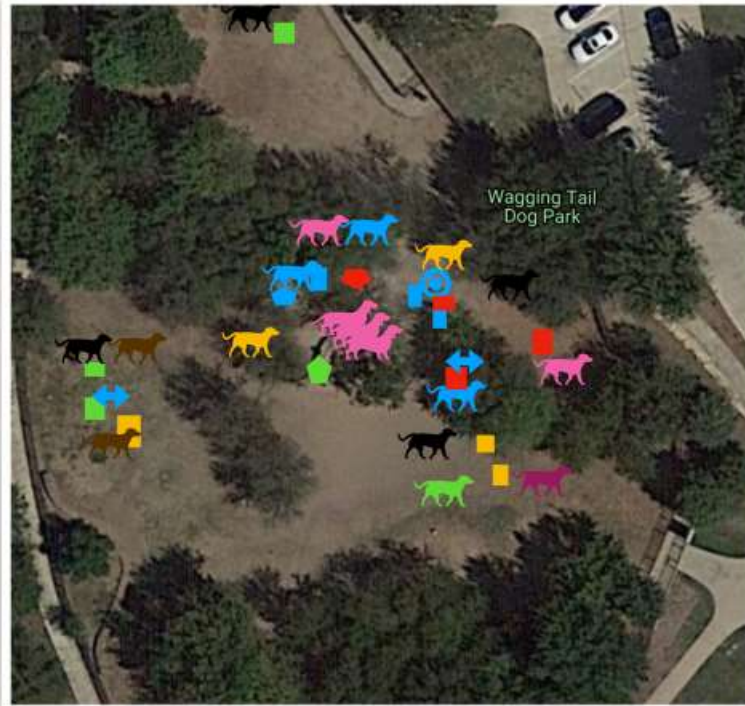


Field Notes

Legend



- Dog Class**
- Sporting dog
 - Herding dog
 - Working dog
 - Poodle or poodle mix
 - Pitt Bull or Pit Bull mix
 - Companion dog
 - Terrier
 - Hound
 - Mixed breed

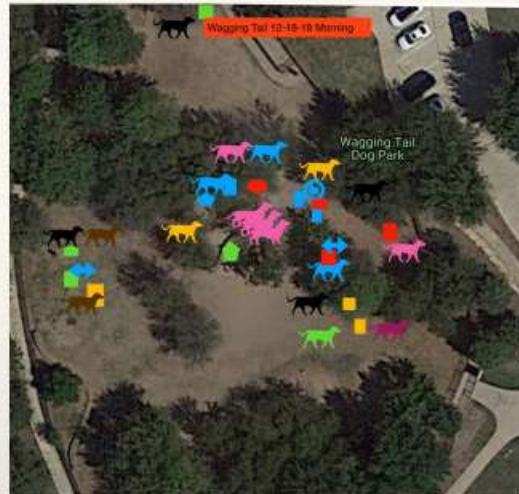


Wagging Tail Dog Park

December 2018

Lively conversation occurs where people are seated near each other. People also speak casually when dogs provoke their interest. The majority of people stay over thirty minutes, including a group of three people with herding dogs and a hound, who play fetch and talk. A person throwing balls to a mix stays over an hour, yet speaks minimally to others. Similarly, a doodle owner on a cellphone watches her dog, and doesn't talk to anyone. All park users appear to have driven to the park today.

Field Notes, (Continued)



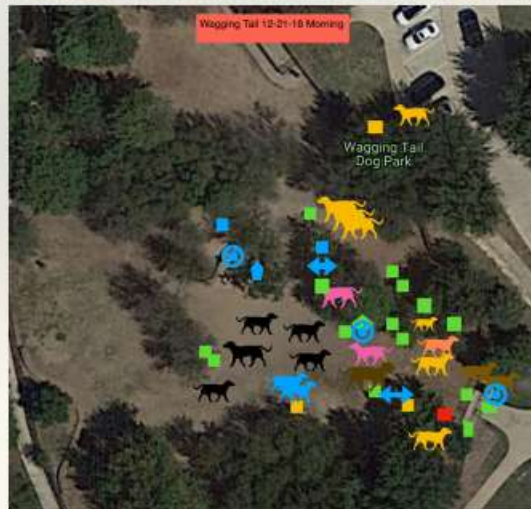
Lively conversation occurs where people are seated near each other. People also speak casually when dogs provoke their interest. The majority of people tend to stay over thirty minutes. A group of three people with herding dogs and a hound throw balls, and talk, but a person throwing balls to a mix stays over an hour and speaks minimally to others. Similarly, a doodle owner on a cellphone watches dogs, and communication with others is minimal.

The majority of park users drove to the park today.



People are spread out watching their dogs and walking around, with some throwing balls. Talking is minimal. One woman alternates between the small and large dog park and walking on the trails surrounding the off-leash areas.

The majority appear to have driven to the park.



Lively conversation occurs as people stay centered near the main seating area. However, herding dogs and labs are prevalent, and these dogs love to play fetch. As the owners spread out and throw balls to their pets, they talk less. Two people drove separately but came at the same time and talked exclusively to each other as if they may have scheduled the get together.

The majority of people appear to have driven here.



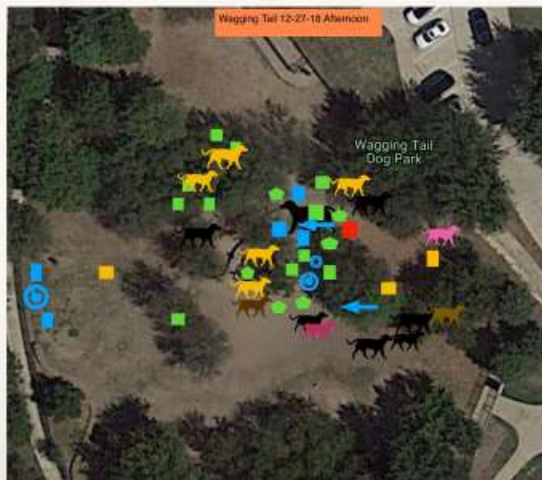
People talked mainly amongst people who accompanied them to the park today. Where families came together, they talked to each other. People alone talked to others as well, and interaction was lively where indicated within the central seating area. Park users appear open to conversation, with a variety of people and among both men and women.

All people appear to have driven to the park today.

Field Notes, (Continued)

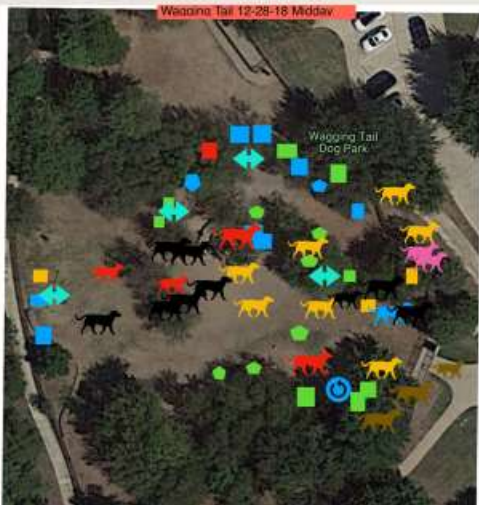


Wagging Tail Dog Park inadvertently remains locked for a number of days due to the holidays.



Wagging Tail 12-27-18 Afternoon

There are a high number of sporting and herding dogs in the park. They are lively and chase balls vigorously today. However, the owners who focus on throwing balls are not as involved in conversations as those who sit near other park users in the central seating area. Cell-phone appears to restrict potential face-to-face communication some, but phone conversations tend to be short, allowing park users opportunities to talk face to face. A heated and lively conversation develops in the central seating area between the owner of a shepherd, a terrier and a stoodle, and a man looks on. A regular and a new-comer join in briefly and soon leave. The majority of park

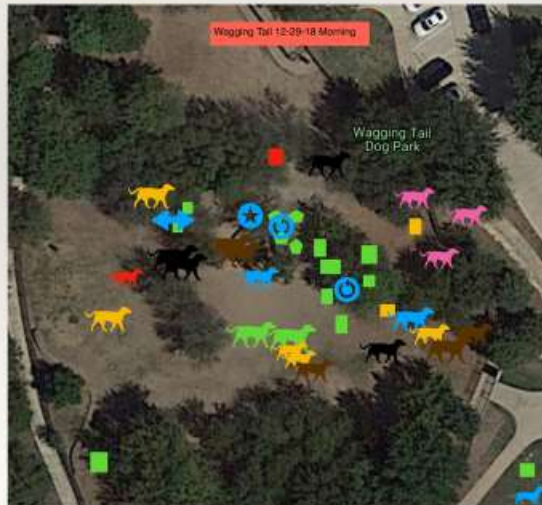


Wagging Tail 12-28-18 Midday

Several people gather in the two seating areas. However, conversation is minimal. The dogs enjoy the benches, jumping over them repeatedly and sometimes walking along them to say hello to the people sitting there. This sometimes causes the people to smile and speak to others.

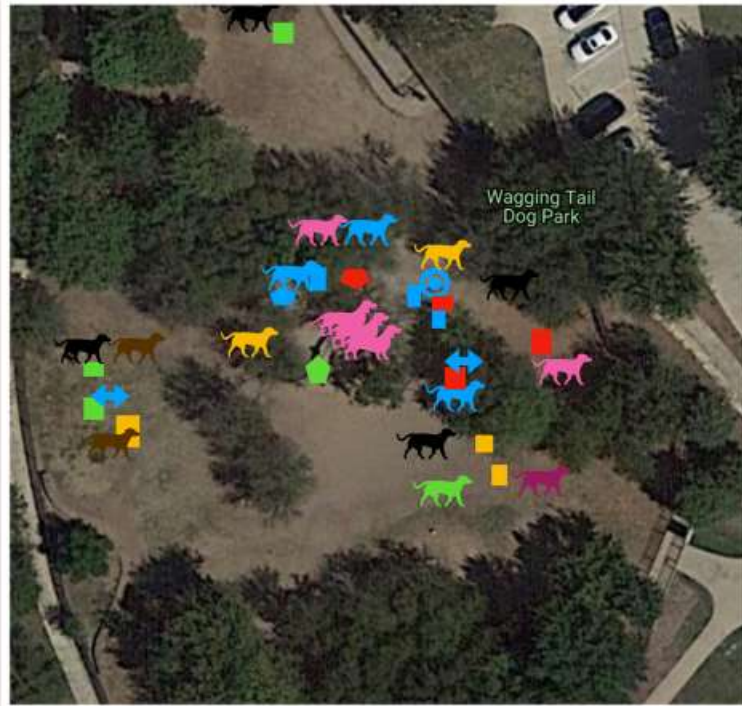
Today, the most vibrant conversation seems to occur where people stand in the park yard watching their dogs play (as indicated by circular arrows. Other arrows indicate more light conversation.)

All park users appear to have driven to the park today.



Wagging Tail 12-29-18 Morning

Early morning, five people huddle watching their dogs chase each other. They talk continuously and stay about an hour. Shortly after they leave, another group of five people stand in the same location talking and watching their dogs play. Two are Rottweilers, which become aggressive, and the people involved leave within thirty minutes as a result of having to pull Rottweilers off lab mix. The majority of park users appear to have driven here.

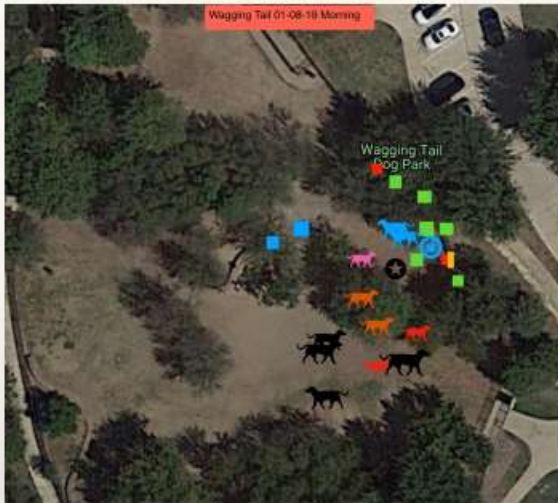


Wagging Tail Dog Park

January 2019

By 5pm, three people that appear to recognize each other are intensely conversing in the central area. After five, the crowd picks up. A group of older people gather around the benches to talk. A younger man joins in. Others who appear to come together walk around and talk to each other.

Field Notes, (Continued)



Wagging Tail 01-08-18 Morning

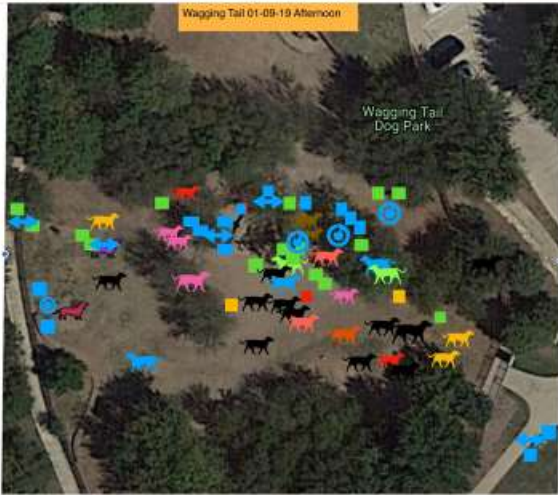
Wagging Tail Dog Park

Whereas 99% of park users drive to this park, a woman walks a Pit Bull to the park this morning.

The owners of two Alaskans appear to recognize each other and talk while they are here. Conversation is lively.

Others are spread out watching dogs and do not speak.

A Pit Bull briefly attacks a mixed breed as it was entering the park but the dogs see to settle down after awhile, and the incident blows over. The majority of park users drove to the park.



Wagging Tail 01-09-19 Afternoon

Wagging Tail Dog Park

After five, the crowd picks up. A group of older people gather around the benches to talk. A younger man joins in. Others who appear to come together walk around and talk to each other.

By 5pm, three people that appear to recognize each other are intensely conversing in the central area. A man who appears to be partly Hispanic seems to know a lot of people. Other familiar people trickle in until a group of five gathers, some of who seem to be from the Northeast and possibly Jewish. Others speak more quietly in pairs or sit watching the more active regulars. The majority of park users appear to have driven here.

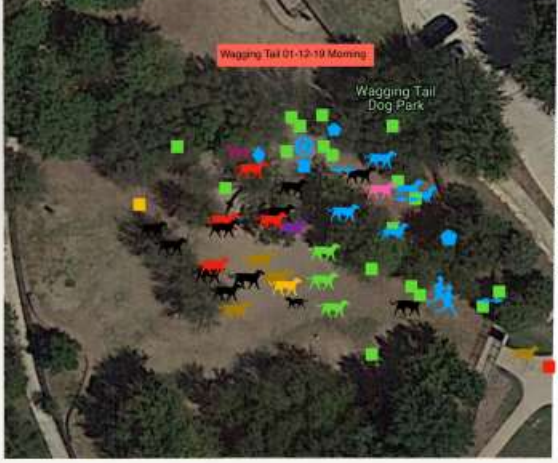


Wagging Tail 01-10-19 Monday

Wagging Tail Dog Park

Small groups of two or three people are scattered throughout the park talking and watching their dogs play. A group of standard poodle owners talk until one of the dogs becomes too rowdy, and the owner decides to leave.

A maintenance worker stands alone outside the fence watching the dogs and laughing and then goes inside and talks to park users. The vast majority of park users appear to have driven.



Wagging Tail 01-12-19 Morning

Wagging Tail Dog Park

Park activity involves casual conversation between two people at the eastern edge of the park, who talk for the duration of the morning. A number of other park users speak casually, and lively conversation occurs near the central seating area.

The vast majority of park users have driven here today.

Field Notes, (Continued)

Wagging Tail 01-15-19 Midday

Three groups of two who came together talk amongst themselves, while only casually greeting others. This leaves those who come alone with very little conversation.

Later in the day, park users start to hover around the central seating area and talk, including two women, a man, a young woman and an older man.

At 3pm, six people remain, including two owners of Alaskans, who smoke and talk for hours in the western seating.

The vast majority of people here today have driven.

Wagging Tail 01-15-19 Afternoon

Those sitting in the central seating area talk casually. Two women talk to each other, as well as a man, a young woman and an older man. Men and women talk to each other readily, including reunites. A man arrives just before 4pm with a Labrador, who sniffs at a small puppy, but the puppy is uninterested, and there seem to be no hard feelings. A few people spread out watching their dogs, but most hover near the central seating area. The regular crowd awaits heavy conversation and laughter around the central seating area. Two girls sit together and talk, and men hover together talking, but some of the regulars talk to a variety of people and also talk to women later in the day. Men also stand out in the park yard, laughing and watching their dogs. It appears that everyone drove to the park.

Wagging Tail 1-17-19 Midday

A woman goes to fill up if water bowls commonly there for the dogs to use the central seating area. Two women stand watching their dogs and laughing, one throwing a ball occasionally. A man arrives with a lab in the afternoon. He stands with them and joins in the brief conversation as they watch their dogs. One of the women goes to retrieve water and speaks to a couple as they enter. A family with two children with an Aussie stand near the others, watching their dogs. They talk casually. As people join in, the conversation grows livelier.

Soon, this group leaves, and a new group accompanied by hounds, herding dogs, a golden and two mixes take over. They stand separately watching their dogs chase each other and do not speak with the exception of the two hound owners, who talk continuously. After a few minutes, a man and a woman start to talk and two small groups of women form, but the lady, on the callistone doesn't talk to anyone or respond when spoken to. A man walks a giant Schnauzer and a mix outside the off-leash area. The vast majority of park users appear to have driven.

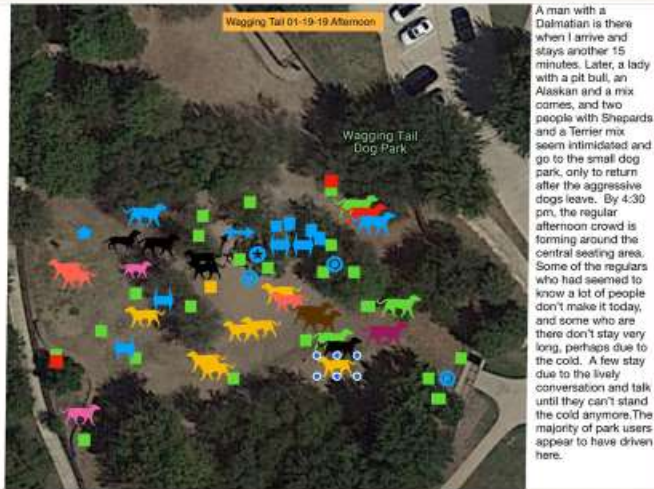
January 18, 2019 Morning

A man stands alone at the central seating area and is glad when two people arrive at the large dog park. One is a regular in the mornings and sometimes comes in the afternoon. He speaks a lot to the newcomer. Another regular seen often in late afternoon arrives with a friend, and they, recognizing the older regular, join in. The conversation quickly becomes lively as commonplaces surface with the banter.

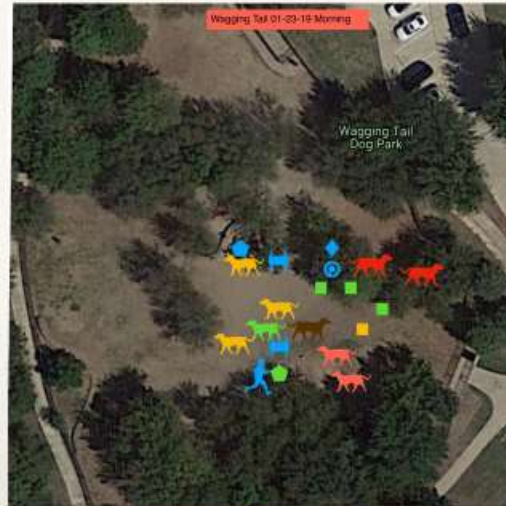
Soon, this group leaves, and a new group accompanied by retrievers arrives. They stand separately watching their dogs chase each other. They do not talk as much as the earlier crowd.

Everyone appears to have driven to the park.

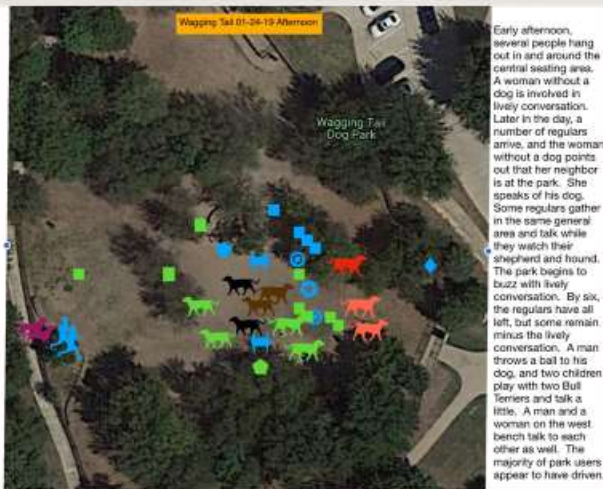
Field Notes, (Continued)



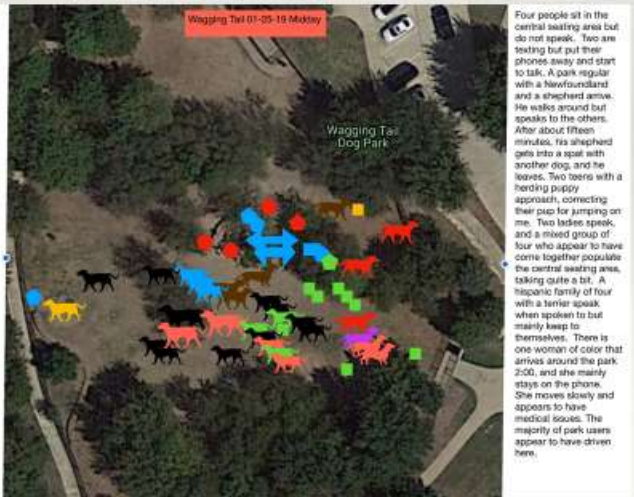
A man with a Dalmatian is there when I arrive and stays another 15 minutes. Later, a lady with a pit bull, an Akaskan and a mix comes, and two people with Shepards and a Terrier mix seem intimidated and go to the small dog park, only to return after the aggressive dogs leave. By 4:30 pm, the regular afternoon crowd is forming around the central seating area. Some of the regulars who had seemed to know a lot of people don't make it today, and some who are there don't stay very long, perhaps due to the cold. A few stay due to the lively conversation and talk until they can't stand the cold anymore. The majority of park users appear to have driven here.



Despite the cold morning, a man and child are around the central seating area with a mix when they arrive. The man and child stay until they arrive. A man and two dogs arrive, followed by a dog regular and a Dalmatian. Intense conversations take place. Regulars quickly separate near the central seating area. Later in the morning, a user throws a ball to his pit bull. The park user appears to have driven to park today.

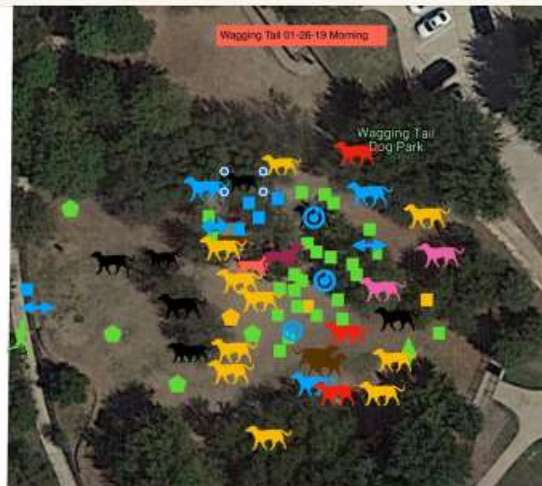


Early afternoon, several people hang out in and around the central seating area. A woman without a dog is involved in lively conversation. Later in the day, a number of regulars arrive, and the woman without a dog points out that her neighbor is at the park. She speaks of his dog. Some regulars gather in the same general area and talk while they watch their shepherd and hound. The park begins to buzz with lively conversation. By six, the regulars have all left, but some remain in the lively conversation. A man throws a ball to his dog, and two children play with two Bull Terriers and talk a little. A man and a woman on the west bench talk to each other as well. The majority of park users appear to have driven.

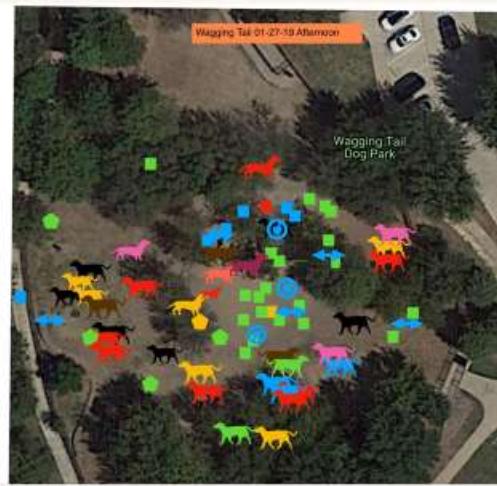


Four people sit in the central seating area but do not speak. Two are texting but put their phones away and start to talk. A park regular with a Newfoundland and a shepherd arrive. He walks around but speaks to the others. After about fifteen minutes, the shepherd gets into a spat with another dog, and he leaves. Two teens with a herding puppy approach, correcting their dog for jumping on me. Two ladies speak, and a mixed group of four who appear to have come together populate the central seating area, talking quite a bit. A Hispanic family of four with a terrier speak when spoken to but mostly keep to themselves. There is one woman of color that arrives around the park 3:00, and she mostly stays on the phone. She moves slowly and appears to have medical issues. The majority of park users appear to have driven here.

Field Notes, (Continued)



Early morning, two regulars stand in the central seating area talking. A little later, a man makes a phone call while throwing balls to a large Australian mix and three women stand in the open talking while watching their dogs play, including a doodle pup, who gets a lot of attention and sparks conversation. Soon, a pair regular arrives with her terrier, and a small group of three ladies start to talk standing near the central seating area. Later in the morning, a man and woman start to talk in the same area, and a large group of approximately 12 gather near this area and talk as they watch their dogs play. Perhaps for a little space, a parent and child walk over to the southern seating area to watch their dogs play, talking occasionally. The majority of park users appear to have driven here.



When I arrive, two regulars stand in the central seating area talking. A man with a large Australian mix throws a ball to his beautiful dog while he makes a phone call, and three women stand in the open talking while they watch their dogs play. One has a doodle puppy, which gets a lot of attention and sparks conversation. Soon, I notice a regular terrier is in the park, and see its mother is here, so I go over and talk to her. A small group of three ladies, including myself, start to talk standing near the central seating area. Soon after they leave, a large group of approximately 12 people, including a lot of men and some women, start to talk as they watch their dogs. Two people who came together walk over to the southern seating area. One is a child, and they watch the dogs play, talking occasionally. Later, people pair up in the central seating area, and conversations develop, some between the same sex and some between both men and women. The park users all appear to have driven here.

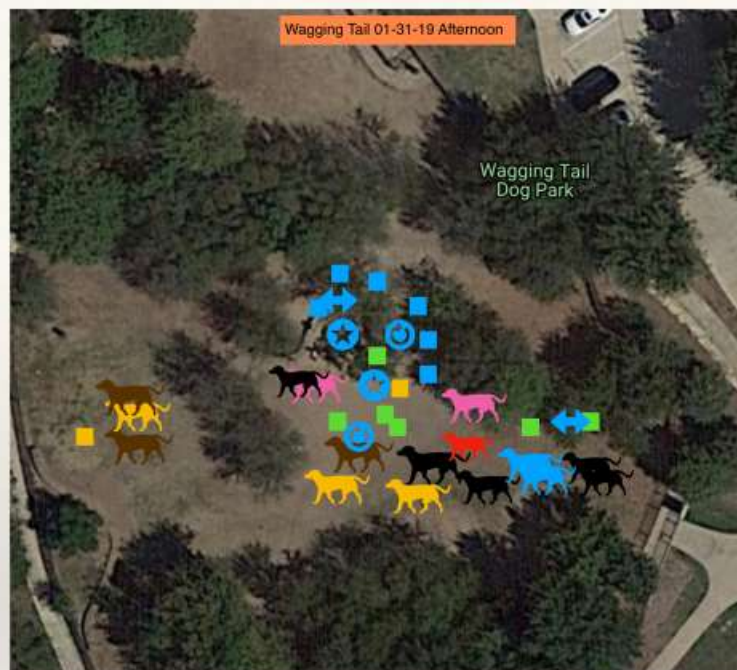


I recognize the owner of a Newfoundland and two herding dogs. He's sitting in the central seating area with two others. They talk a little amongst themselves. Others arrive and find their place along the central area as well. Two women who came together move over to the southern seats and talk while they watch their Aussies, and two men find a place in the open area to talk while they also watch their dogs. Both white and hispanic people are present, and two hispanic men appear to keep to themselves as they stand and watch their dogs alone, one checking his phone periodically. After awhile, one starts to talk to one of the ladies in the central area. Two women venture out to a place where their dogs can run, and they stand near each other as they talk and watch their dogs. The park users appear to have driven here.



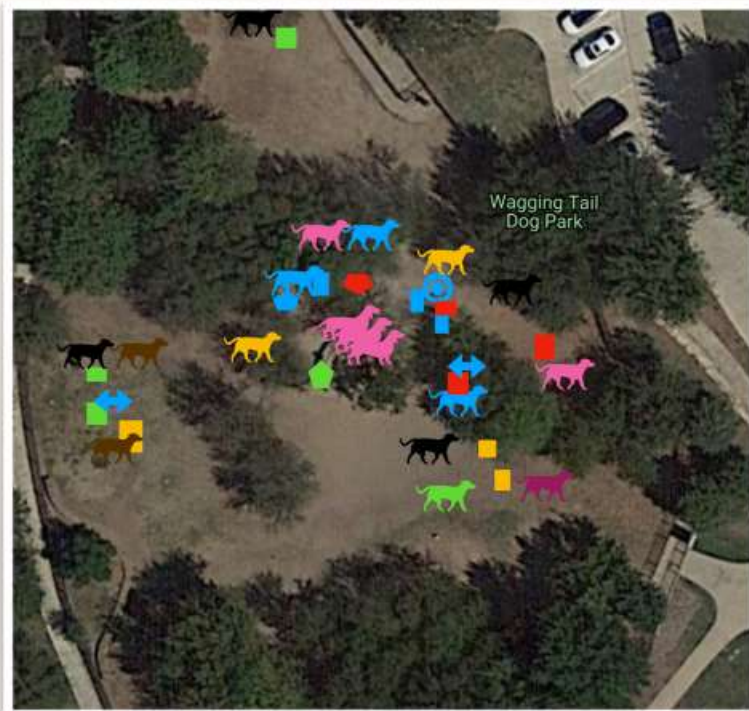
The dedicated regulars are here this morning despite the fact it is quite chilly. A Newfoundland and two herding dogs seem invigorated by the cold and move about more than usual, especially the herding dogs, who seem particularly playful. A lady and her found play look, and the others gather in the central seating area talking constantly as if doing so would somehow take the chill out of the air. Everyone here is Caucasian except one young black woman, who seems to keep the conversation going. Everyone appears to have driven here today.

Mid-afternoon, there are a handful of people sitting and lightly conversing in the central seating area. As the day wears on, some of the regulars show up, but they don't all stand together. Smaller groups form around dogs playing and near the central seating area, and lively conversations develop in these areas. The majority of park users appear to have driven here.



Wagging Tail Dog Park

January 31, 2019

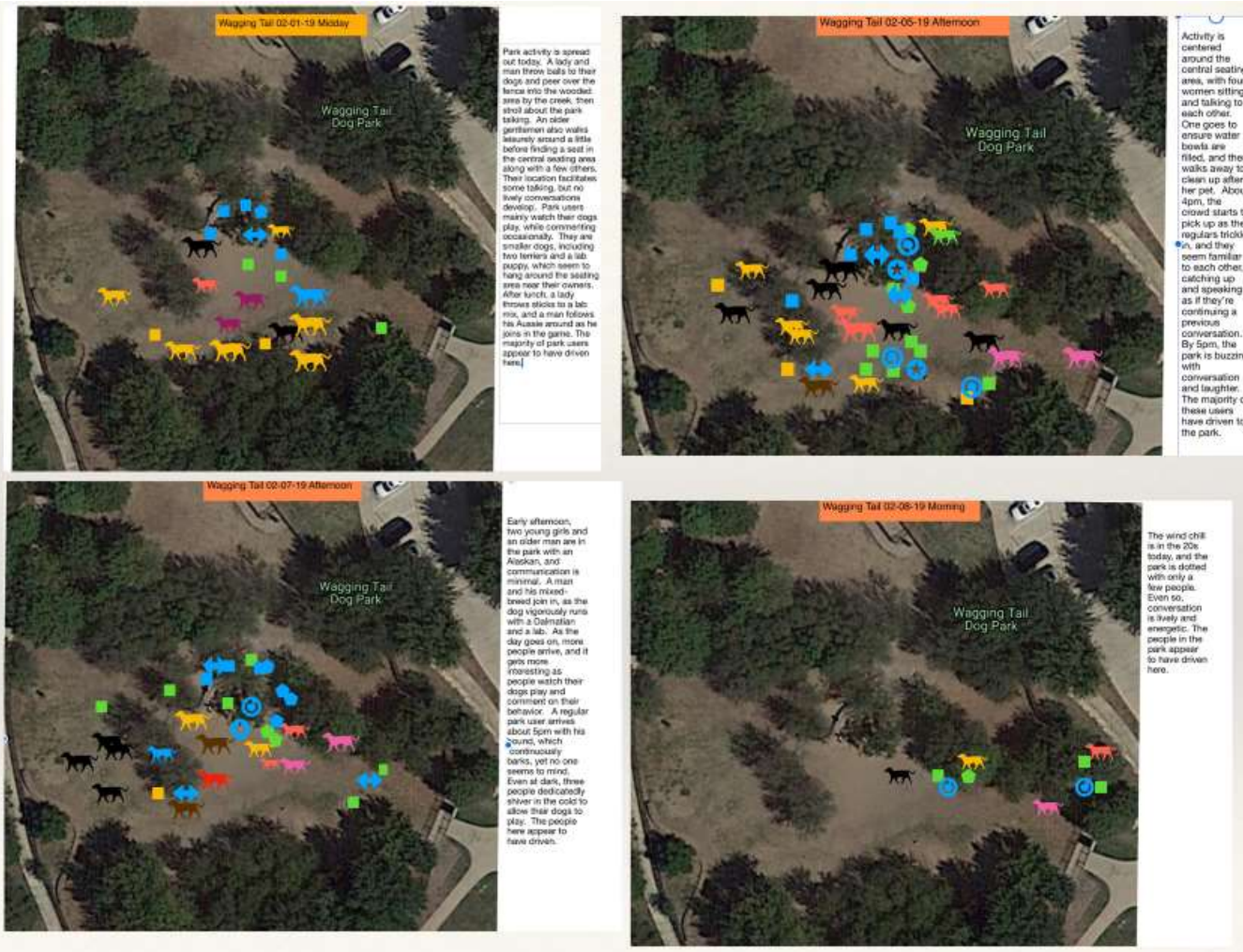


Wagging Tail Dog Park

February 2019

Activity is centered around the central seating area, with four women sitting and talking to each other. One goes to ensure water bowls are filled, and then walks away to clean up after her pet. About 4pm, the crowd starts to pick up as the regulars trickle in, and they seem familiar to each other, catching up and speaking as if they're continuing a previous conversation. By 5pm, the park is buzzing with conversation and laughter.

Field Notes, (Continued)



Field Notes, (Continued)



Spurill 02-13-19 Afternoon

Wagging Tail Dog Park

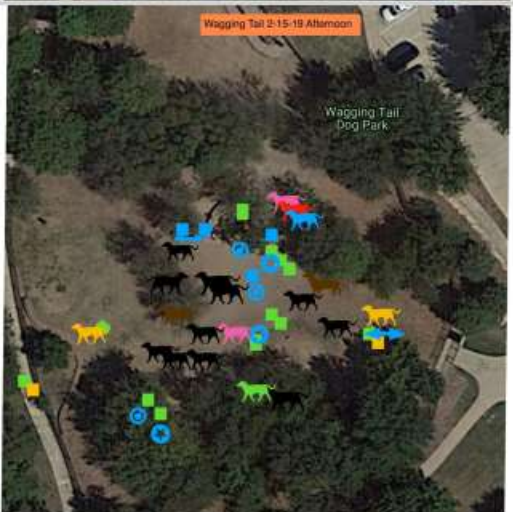
There are three people standing in the central seating area talking as a Pitt Bull looks at a man walking two dogs along the path that circles the off-leash area for large dogs. Fences seem to have this effect on dogs. There are a number of doodles here today, and their owners seem to congregate and talk. One woman sits alone and doesn't speak to anyone, while a group of women stand near the central seating area and make light conversation. The men join in every so often in response to the dog actions. The park users appear to have driven here.



Wagging Tail 2-14-19 Morning

Wagging Tail Dog Park

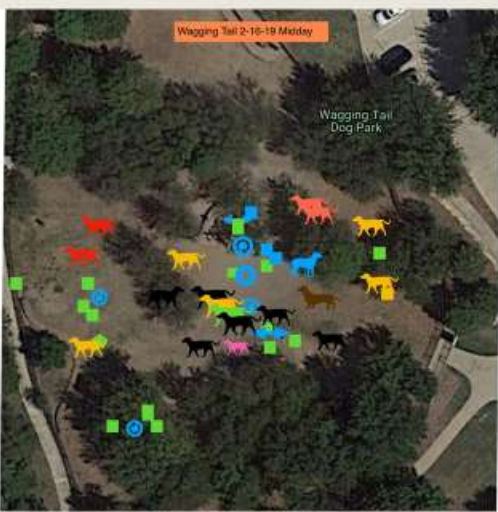
A lady watching her golden retriever is here for about 20 minutes as three people in the southern wooded area throw balls to a Pitt Bull. Their conversation is lively amongst this Hispanic group, who appear to have come together. A woman with two Shetlandponies greets me, and we talk as I pet her dogs. Scott, a Dalmatian owner arrives, who regulars refer to as the Mayor of the dog park. He's an elderly man with a habit of meeting a group of regulars in the morning around 7:30 a.m., and he sometimes makes a second round in the late afternoon. Today, he's later than usual. As he explains, he's watching his grandchildren this week, which are apparently a handful. As he is leaving, he speaks to a woman arriving with two litters, who just stays for a few minutes. Later in the morning, the park is more active, as a man throws ball to a Retriever, and another walks a Pitt Bull around the exterior track. Two women in separate cars meet with a herding dog and a mix. They talk continuously but only to each other, as another man sits in the same area and does not talk to anyone. Others in the park remain scattered but appear amused by their dogs, as they smile and giggle about their pets. The park users appear to have driven here.



Wagging Tail 2-15-19 Afternoon

Wagging Tail Dog Park

A number of doodles are gathered in groups of five on the westernmost seating area talking. A Hispanic man and woman walk around the park together and talk. A black man stands out in the park yard watching his dog and is very responsive to my greeting despite that he has on sunglasses. Toward 5pm, regulars start to come in, and the conversation gets a little more lively. After 6pm, as it grows dark and very cold, a small group of 4 park users dedicated to exercising their pets after work huddle close to each other in the central seating area. The vast majority of park users appear to have driven here.



Wagging Tail 2-16-19 Midday

Wagging Tail Dog Park

Park activity is spread out over the off-leash area today. There is a group of three women standing close and talking, and several sit in the central seating area. Conversations later in the afternoon occur in the central seating area where a few regulars know each other. Mild laughter and light conversation is spread throughout the park. The majority of park users appear to have driven here.

Field Notes, (Continued)



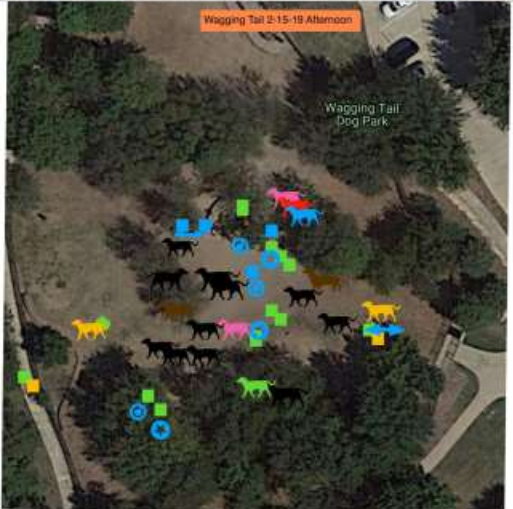
Spurill 02-13-18 Afternoon

There are three people standing in the central seating area talking as a Pitt Bull looks at a dog along the path that circles the off-leash area for large dogs. Fences seem to have this effect on dogs. There are a number of doodles here today, and their owners seem to congregate and talk. One woman sits alone and doesn't speak to anyone, while a group of women stand near the central seating area and make light conversation. The men join in every so often in response to the dog actions. The park users appear to have driven here.



Wagging Tail 2-14-18 Morning

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Wagging Tail 2-15-18 Afternoon

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Wagging Tail 2-16-18 Midday

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Bosque Park

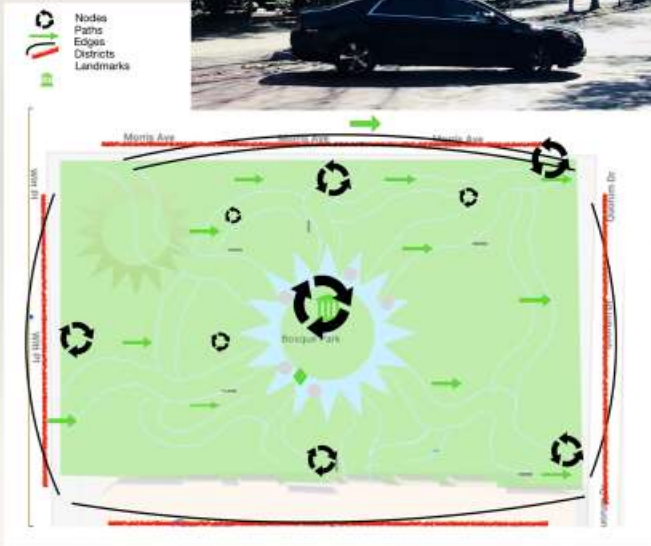
December 2018

A sense of calm pervades as people walk dogs, make time for a cigarette or squeeze in needed phone calls with the smooth sound of water in the background. A woman breaks the rhythm, sitting in the sun for awhile, then strolling over to the fountain. Others push baby carriages and take in the sights of the park that many seem to take for granted.

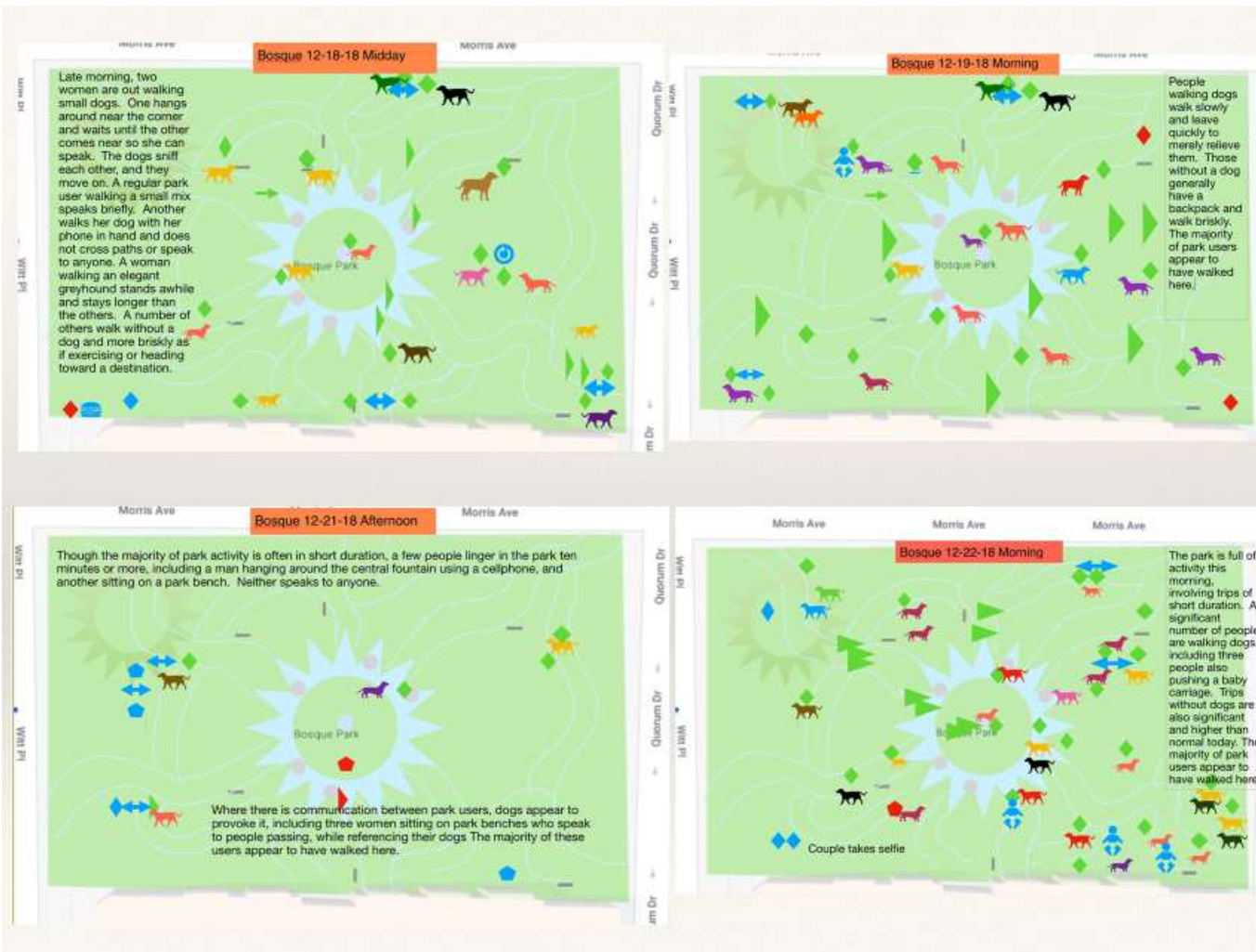
Field Notes, (Continued)

- Dog Class**
- Sporting dog
 - Herding dog
 - Working dog
 - Poodle or poodle mix
 - Pitt Bull or Pit Bull mix
 - Companion dog
 - Terrier
 - Hound
 - Mixed breed

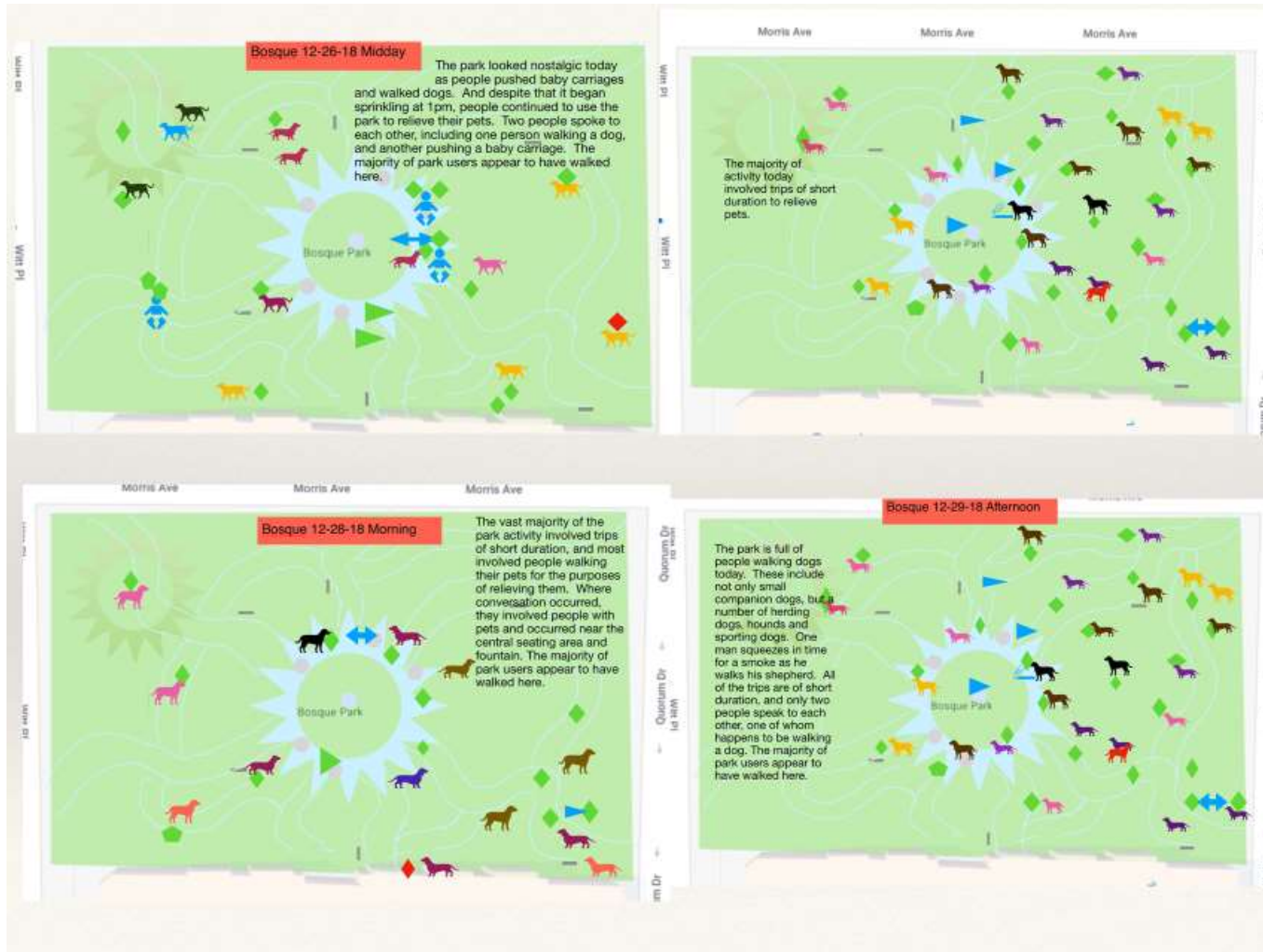
- ◇ 10 minutes or less
- ◊ 10-20 minutes
- 30 minutes or more
- ▽ Destination trip
- ↔ Casual communication
- ⊕ Lively conversation
- ⊕ Recognition
- Standing
- Sitting
- Throwing ball or disk
- Using cell phone
- ☹ Smoking
- 👶 Baby in carriage
- 👶 Child walking
- 🍷 Eating
- Dog Class**
- Sporting dog



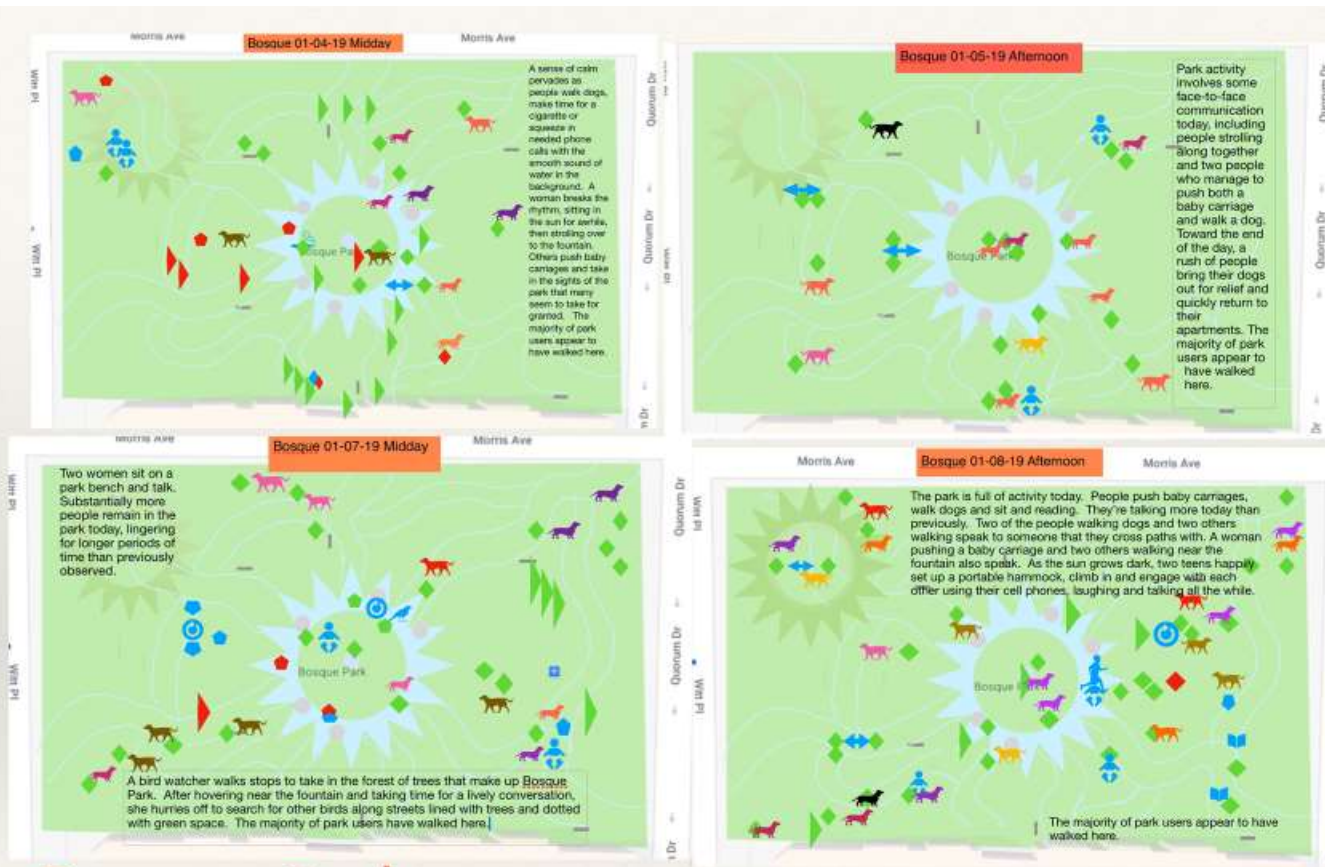
Field Notes, (Continued)



Field Notes, (Continued)



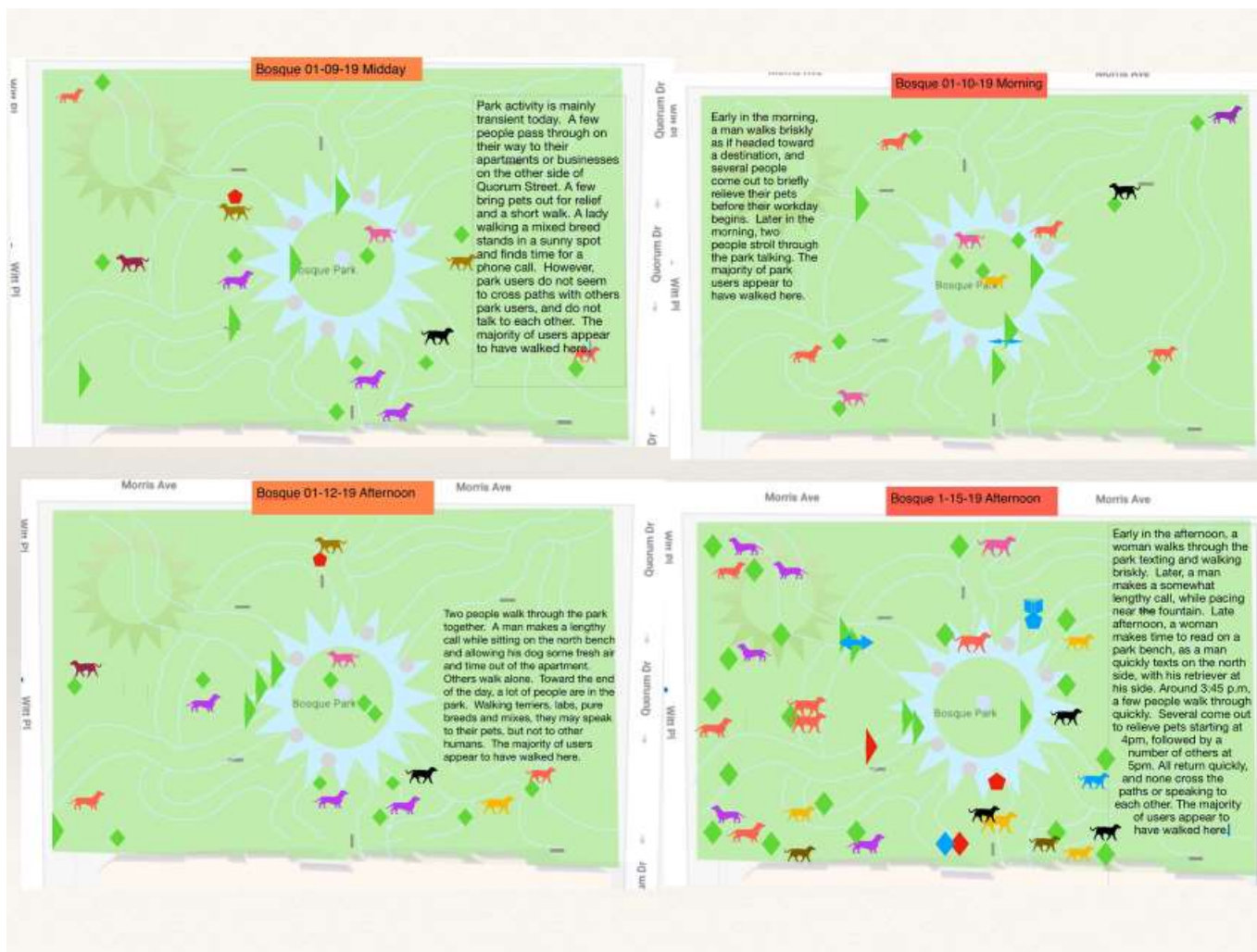
Field Notes, (Continued)



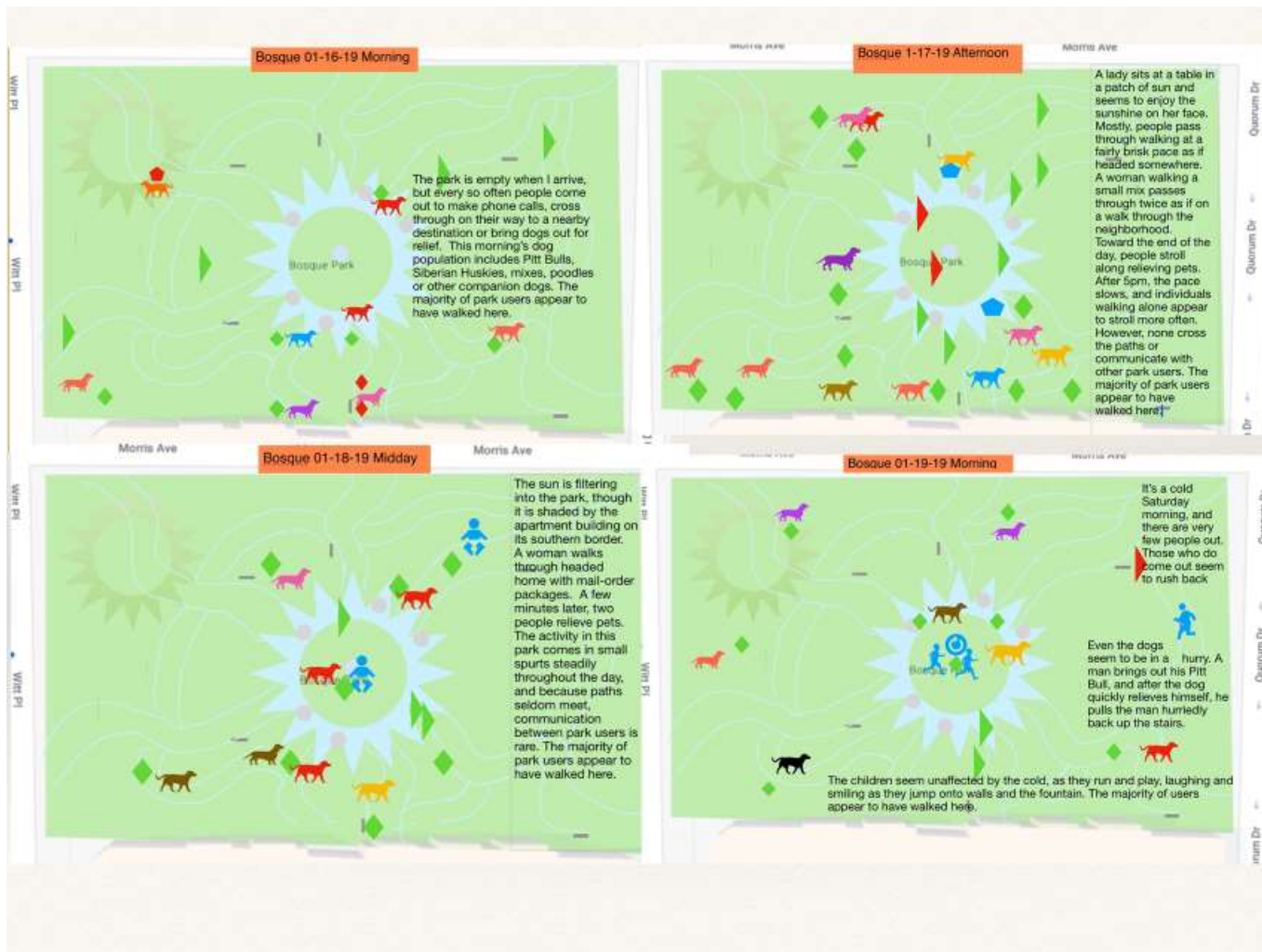
Bosque Park

January 2019

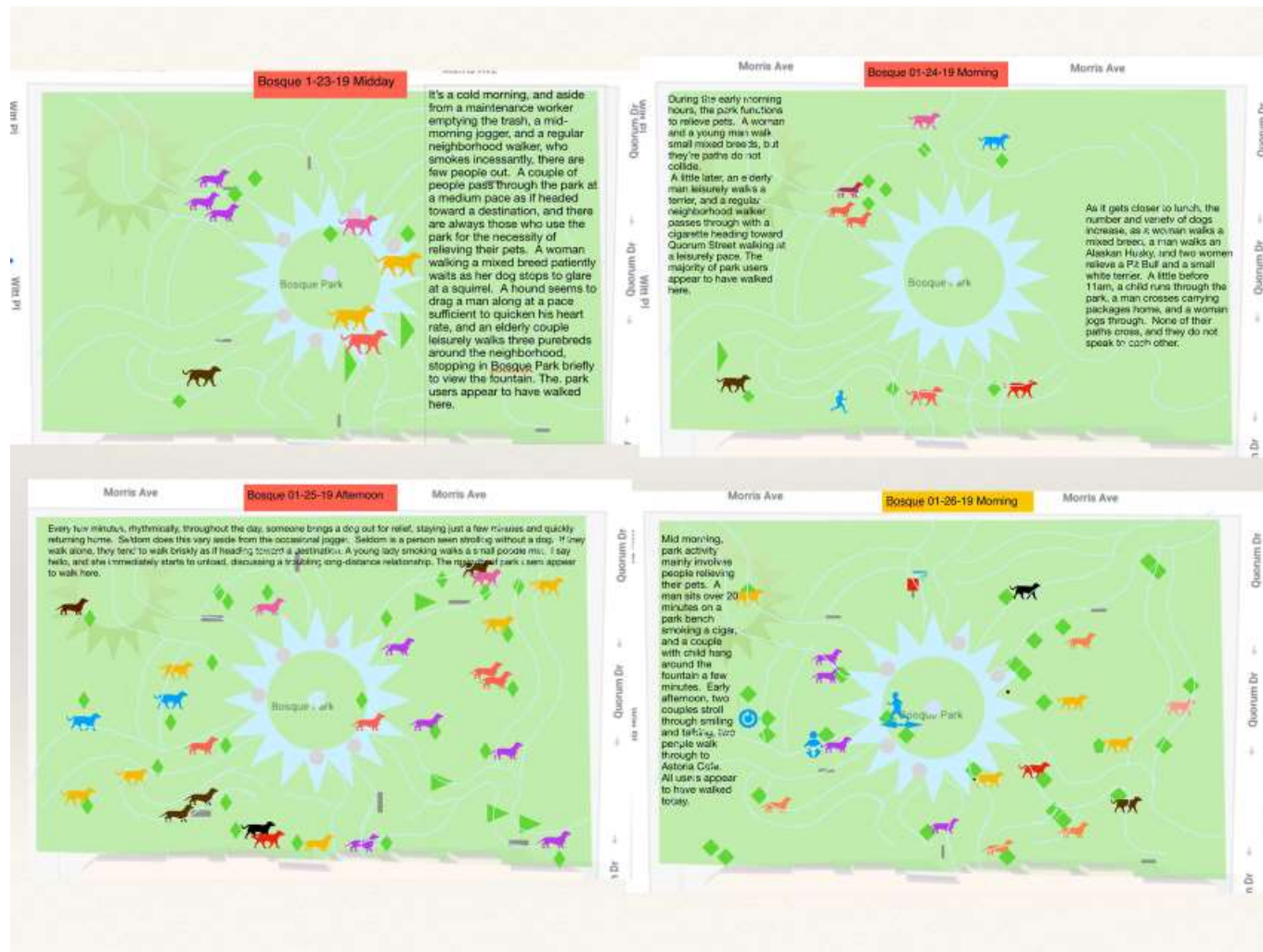
Field Notes, (Continued)



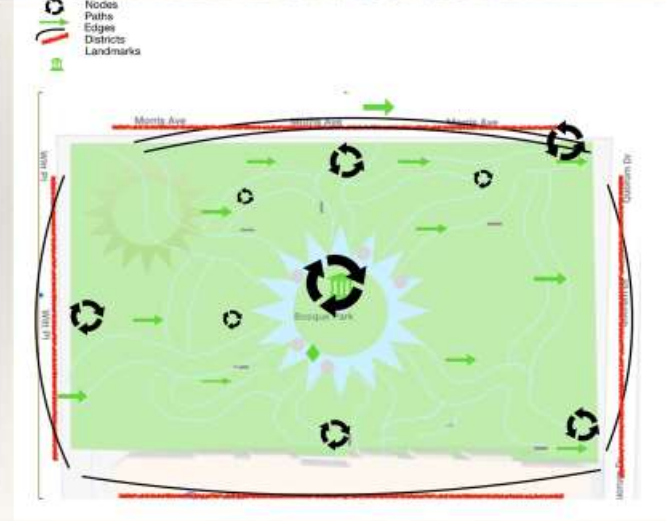
Field Notes, (Continued)



Field Notes, (Continued)



Field Notes, (Continued)



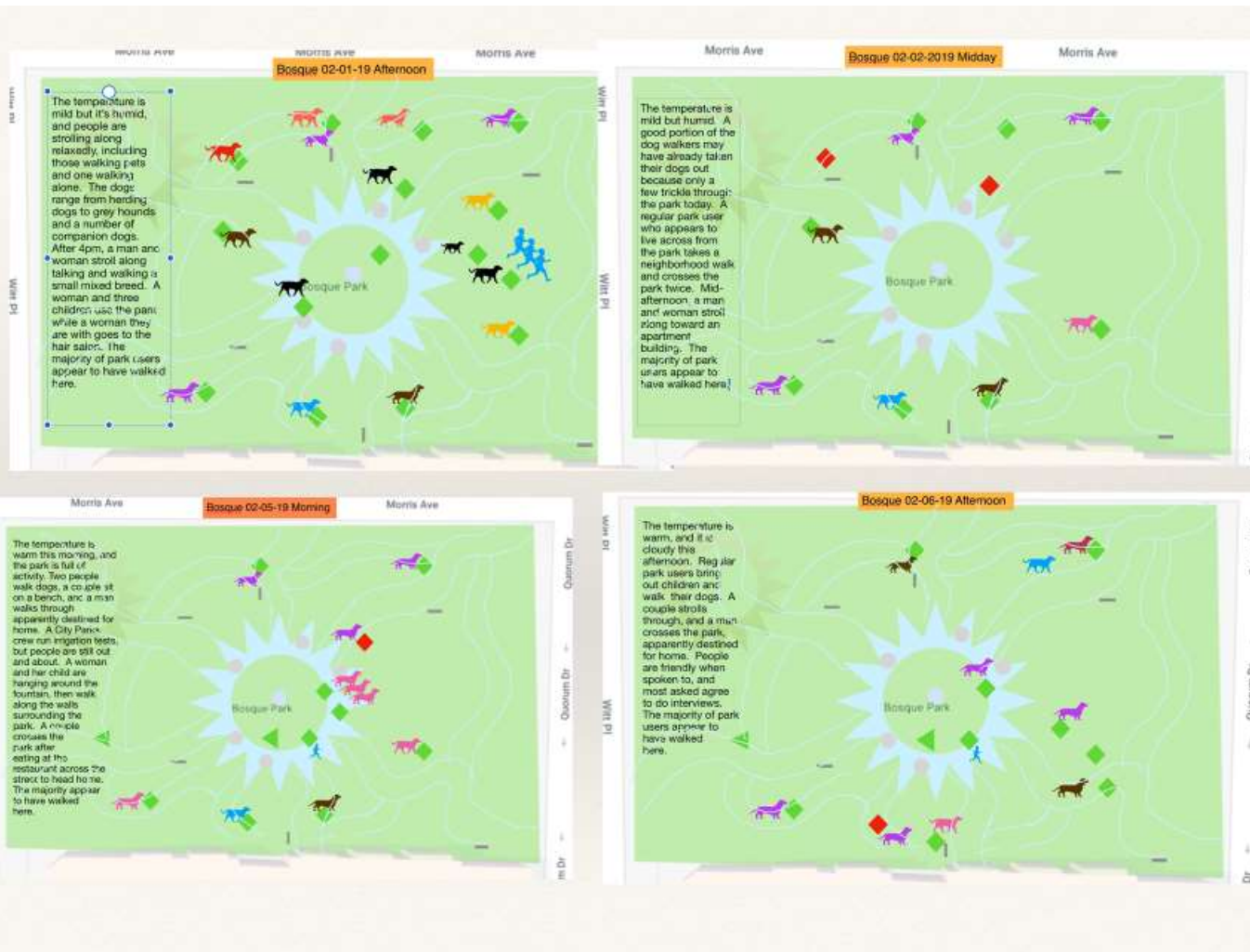


Bosque Park

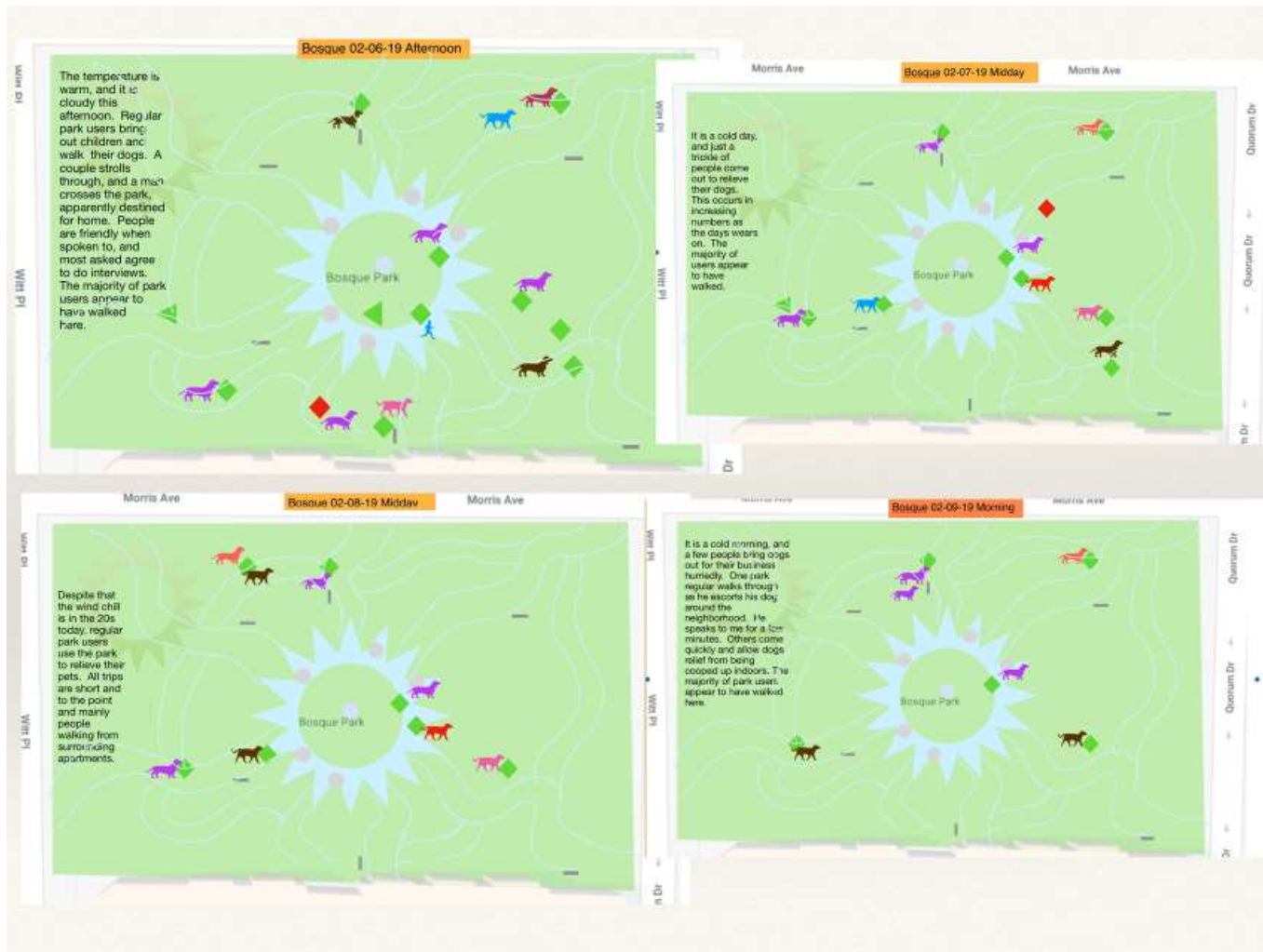
February 2019

Every few minutes, rhythmically, throughout the day, someone brings a dog out for relief, staying just a few minutes and quickly returning home. Seldom does this vary aside from the occasional jogger, and seldom is a person seen strolling without a dog. If they walk alone, they tend to walk briskly as if heading toward a destination.

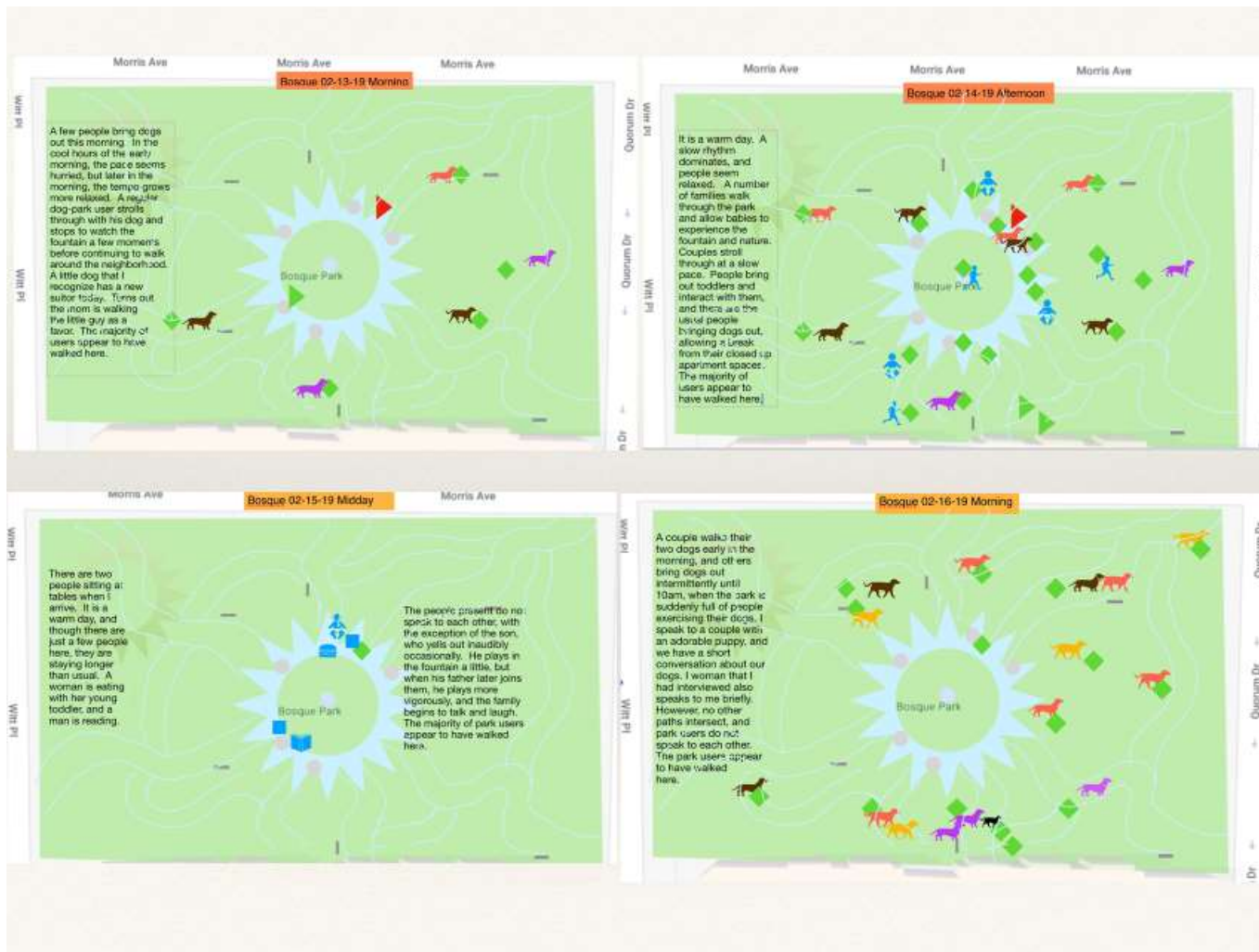
Field Notes, (Continued)



Field Notes, (Continued)



Field Notes, (Continued)



People talked to each other when they used the park benches. Recognition as was apparent by use of dog names. . .

After 5pm, the number of park users increases, people congregate on and around the seating areas, and lively conversation emerges.

Most stood in the central part of the park north of the entrance near their dogs, and only one came merely to relieve their pets. Those who stayed over thirty minutes and sat on the southernmost benches were involved in lively conversation. Others threw balls to their pets and communicated minimally with other park users.



Spruill Dog Park December 2018



Field Notes, (Continued)





Spruill Dog Park January 2019

Dogs are popular in this neighborhood, possibly due to its liberal pet policies, which restrict dogs by size and not by breed. . .

Dog parks bring dogs together. It seems that dogs need other dogs just as people need other people.

Field Notes, (Continued)



Field Notes, (Continued)



Field Notes, (Continued)

Sprull 01-17-19 Morning



Early morning, a lady throws balls to a herding dog and a Rottweiler. Later, three people are in the park. A man throws balls to a mix, and a few minutes later a woman arrives with a golden retriever puppy. She tried to play fetch with the puppy, but he will not cooperate because he's so interested in the other dogs. The woman communicates casually, and the man quietly says hello. He then begins throwing balls to his dog. Another man arrives, says hello and continuously throws balls to his herding dog. With a high focus on throwing balls, there is little communication between park users. The majority of people appear to have walked to the park today.

Sprull 1-18-19 Afternoon



Three people are in the park when I arrive, and they all sit at the wooden bench taking casually. There are not as many people throwing balls today, but more into talking.

A woman communicates casually, and the man quietly says hello and then begins throwing balls to his dog. A person on a cellphone in the back sits alone, and after she gets off her device, she just watches the dogs. A group in the middle talks loudly, and everyone near them looks that direction. A group of four and a group of five forms after five, and they laugh and talk. The majority of people walked here.

Sprull 01-19-19 Midday



Three people are in the park with five dogs when I arrive. They leave quickly. It is a windy, cold day, and the wind seems to gain momentum as it passes over the hill that makes up the north side of the park.

A man drives here with two herding dogs, and the dogs play together while the man sits in the car. People in the small dog area watch them as they join in a game of fetch with the other park user.

The large dog side of the park is a little soggy, and some of the large dog owners use the small dog side, which is more dry.

Opportunities for human social interaction were very limited today. The majority of people using the park are alone with their pets and pass the time throwing balls to them. At the height of the afternoon as the sun shines its brightest, there is a cold wind blowing, and the park is empty. The majority of park users appear to have walked to the park.

Sprull 01-21-19 Afternoon



It is a breezy, somewhat cool day, in the beginning of the day, people come to allow the dogs relief and leave quickly. A few people with herding dogs throw balls and afternoon, and they talk some but leave quickly. Doodle gets into fight with one of the other dogs, and everyone leaves at 4pm. Train, doodle and owner.

The majority of park users come after five. A man and woman stand near the main seating area laughing and talking. They speak to a man when he waters his shepherd puppy after an intense game of fetch. Three people stand just north of the watering area laughing and talking. Two people also talk near the north bench. The others are spread out watching their dogs and not talking to other people as much. The majority of park users appear to have walked here today.

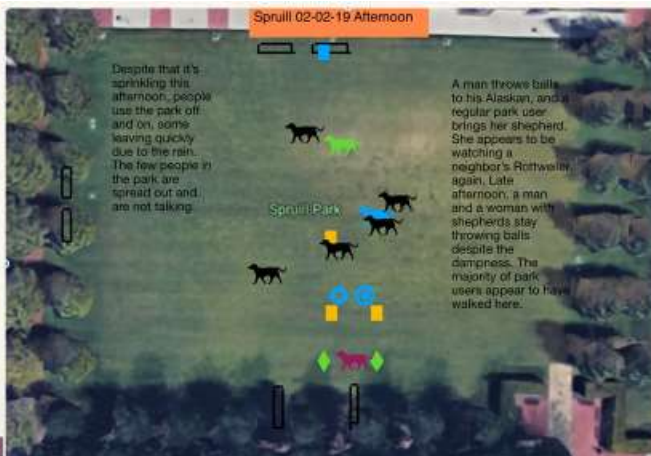
Field Notes, (Continued)



Field Notes, (Continued)



Field Notes, (Continued)



Spruill, February 2019

Field Notes, (Continued)

