



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 12, 2017

City Officially Opens Fitzsimmons Family Dog Park – a PetSafe Park

WHEELING, W.Va. – City officials gathered on Thursday, October 12, at the Fitzsimmons Family Dog Park – A PetSafe Park to mark the official opening of Wheeling’s first dog park. Members of the Fitzsimmons family and the Wheeling Dog Park Association were in attendance for the ceremonial ribbon cutting.

Plans for the dog park began in 2013 when the community participated in PetSafe’s “Bark for Your Park” contest, which earned Wheeling \$25,000 toward the project. In 2016, the association announced that the Fitzsimmons Foundation also donated \$25,000 for park construction. Both contributions are represented in the formal name, Fitzsimmons Family Dog Park – A PetSafe Park.

The City and the Wheeling Dog Park Association worked together to develop a vision for the project by pulling best practices from around the country, vetting several potential sites, and raising money through generous donors and fundraising events. The City made a major investment in the park for basic site preparation before Savage Construction was awarded the \$145,000 contract in 2016. Savage cleared and graded the land, spread grass seed and mulch, and installed more than 1,700 feet of fencing and gates through its subcontractor, Precision Fence.

The two-acre park is separated into two fenced-off areas – 1.35 acres for larger dogs and .61 acres for dogs weighing less than 30 pounds. Both sides feature watering stations and old fire hydrants that local artists will paint in the future. Personalized bricks have been placed just outside the fence to the park.

The City owns the property and will manage ongoing maintenance of the park. The City and the Wheeling Dog Park Association will co-host a grand opening event in the spring, when several other donors will be recognized for their contributions that will enhance the park in the coming months.

During the press conference, Mayor Elliott recognized members of the Wheeling Dog Park Association who have dedicated time and resources to the project and continue to be involved with the park: Gregg Boury, Jeremy Morris, Derrick McKee, Tara Patterson, Don Patterson, Mike Kearns, Susan Hogan, and Luann Bidka-Rieck.

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