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MAYOR RESPONDS TO CITIZENS CONCERNED **ABOUT THE BEMAN PARK DOG PARK**

For Release: Immediately
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(TROY - June 25, 2009) – In response to the City Council’s inability to respond appropriately to resident needs, Mayor Harry Tutunjian today instructed the heads of city departments to formulate a plan regarding the lawful and secure creation of dog parks within the city of Troy.

“This is a situation that could’ve been avoided had the members of the City Council majority acted responsibly and communicated to me their plan to create a dog park. Except, they didn’t have a plan to begin with,” said Mayor Tutunjian. “I am in favor of creating a dog park, if that is what residents would like to do. I object to the actions of the City Council majority which put in jeopardy the safety of city residents and places the city at risk legally.”

Mayor Tutunjian has directed the heads of various departments to meet and discuss the issues related to creating any dog park in Troy. Those departments include zoning, planning, codes, engineering, law, and parks and recreation. Each of these departments is responsible for addressing separate aspects of the use of city property including: for what use the land is approved (zoning), what regulations govern that use (codes), whether those regulations comply with current city law (law), how best to construct and implement the proposed use (planning and engineering), and who will staff and maintain the park (parks and recreation).

The City Council appropriated \$2,800 from their Neighborhood Improvement Program funds for the purposes of creating a dog park in Beman Park. This pork barrel spending is the prerogative of the City Council majority, which controls who gets what funds vis a vis the program. It has been noted that the City Council has no direct authority over any executive branch department within the city other than its responsibility of oversight. Thus, in order to create a dog park, the City Council must necessarily have circumvented any and all city agencies and acted outside the scope of its authority when authorizing those funds for this purpose.

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