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## PRESS RELEASE

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### Mayor Responds to Legal Ruling

Mayor Cedric Glover says establishing a dog park along the riverfront is not a priority, even though a state district court judge today ordered him to comply with a City Council resolution that requires him to sign an agreement to build one at Charles & Marie Hamel's Memorial Park.

Judge Leon Emanuel ruled in favor of a group seeking to build a dog park in a designated area of Hamel's Park. Councilmembers overrode the Mayor's veto to reject funds obtained by the Caddo Parish Commission from the Red River Waterway Commission to construct the park.

Mayor Glover said the City has an established list of priorities compiled in 2009 by a citizen-driven coalition assembled to identify projects needed along the riverfront. Although a dog park is referenced, it was not tagged as the highest item on that list.

"The idea of a dog park is fine but these parks also come with problems and challenges," Mayor Glover said. "There is ongoing costs and maintenance to consider once it's built and there also will be operational issues to address; such as the fact that there is no one currently available on the city's staff to police and operate this park on a regular basis."

Furthermore, Judge Emanuel's ruling effectively diminishes the checks and balances that exist between the city's Executive and Legislative branches, Mayor Glover said.

"What the judge has done is essentially neuter the powers of the office of the Mayor," Mayor Glover said. "Going forward, all the council would need is five votes to basically set aside any action taken by the lone public official elected by a vote of the entire city, thus opening the door for special interest groups to place undue pressure on individual council members in order to facilitate efforts that may or may not have the best interest of the entire populace at heart."

The \$280,000 designated for the dog park would not cover the projected cost to build and operate a recreational facility in this part of the city. The source for the additional funding needed is uncertain.

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