

**TO: PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

**FROM: DAREN ANDERSON DEPARTMENT: COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**DATE: NOVEMBER 28, 2017**

**SUBJECT: PARK IMPROVEMENT ORDINANCE FOR PEERS PARK DOG OFF-LEASH EXERCISE AREA**

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission) recommend that Council adopt a park improvement ordinance for a new dog off-leash exercise area at Peers Park.

**BACKGROUND**

The Commission has been interested in expanding the number of City dog parks for many years. Palo Alto has three dog parks: Greer Park (.12 acres), Hoover Park (.14 acres), and Mitchell Park (.56 acres). The Commission's 2010 policy directive to consider dog recreation opportunities as part of any park renovation project has not resulted in any new dog parks.

During the Parks Master Plan process, staff and the Ad Hoc Committee analyzed all areas of Palo Alto's park system for potential dog park locations. The results helped form the dog park policy and program included in the draft Parks Master Plan:

**Parks Master Plan**

Policy 2.D Actively pursue adding dedicated, fenced dog parks in multiple neighborhoods, equitably distributed between north and south Palo Alto. The size of the dog parks will vary, but should strive to be at least .25 acres. Dog parks should not be placed in Open Space Preserves.

Program 2.D.1 The City will evaluate and select at least six dedicated, fenced dog parks, equitably distributed across north and south Palo Alto, from the following list of potential locations:

- Eleanor Pardee Park (North, .41 Acres)
- Bowden (North, .37 Acres)
- Greer Park (Improve existing) (South, .87 Acres)
- Peers Park (North, .73 Acres)
- Hoover (Improve existing) (South, 1 Acre)
- Robles (South, .47 Acres)
- Mitchell Park (Expand existing) (South, 1.2 Acres)
- Kingsley Island (North, .27 Acres)

- Werry Park (North, .31 Acres)
- Juana Briones Park (South, .47 Acres)
- Heritage (North, .27 Acres)

On December 15, 2016, a community meeting was held to discuss the concept of adding a dog park at Peers Park. Approximately 25 people attended the meeting. Most of the participants supported the idea of adding a dog park. There was one family that spoke out against it. They explained that they walk their dog at the park, often off-leash, but they like the park the way it is.

### Parks and Recreation Commission

Staff, the Dog Park Ad Hoc Committee, and two former Parks and Recreation Commissioners (who had previously served on the Dog Park Ad Hoc Committee) met on March 8, 2017 to discuss adding a dog park. The Ad Hoc Committee and staff agree that adding a dog park at Peers Park is appropriate, and that staff should proceed with the design phase.

At the March 28, 2017 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, staff discussed the concept of adding a dog park at Peers Park. The Commission supported the concept and recommended that staff proceed with creating a design. At the July 25, 2017, the Commission reviewed the dog park design and requested that staff proceed with Planning Review and Park Improvement Ordinance process.

The Planning Department completed the Architectural Review Application on October 23, 2017.

### **DISCUSSION**

Using feedback generated from recent (and previous) dog park community meetings, suggestions from the Commission and Ad Hoc Committee, and years of feedback from dog park users at the City's other three dog parks, staff created a draft design for the Peers Park Dog Park.

Key features include:

- Five foot high vinyl clad chain link fence
- Separate large dog and small dog enclosures
- Wind Screens for the tennis courts to limit interactions with the dogs
- Water fountains to provide water for the dogs
- Concrete sidewalk leading to the dog park entrance
- Six picnic tables for seating
- Trash receptacles and dog waste bag dispenser

The capital improvement project to fund the dog park was approved by Council in June 2017, and the funds are now available.

Process and Approximate Timeline:

- Council approval of the Park Improvement Ordinance
- Solicit Bids and hiring contractor to build a dog park (2-3 months)
- Construction (3 weeks)

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: Park Improvement Ordinance for the Peers Park Dog Off-Leash Exercise Area

\*NOT YET APPROVED\*

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

Ordinance of The Council Of The City Of Palo Alto Approving And  
Adopting a Plan for Construction of a Dog Off-Leash Exercise Area at  
Peers Park

The Council of the City of Palo Alto does ORDAIN as follows:

SECTION 1. Findings. The City Council finds and declares that:

(a) Article VIII of the Charter of the City of Palo Alto and Section 22.08.005 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code require that, before any substantial building, construction, reconstruction or development is commenced or approved, upon or with respect to any land held by the City for park purposes, the Council shall first cause to be prepared and by ordinance approve and adopt a plan therefor.

(b) Peers Park (the "Park") is dedicated to park purposes.

(c) The City intends to authorize construction of a dog off-leash exercise area at the Park. The area intended as the location of the dog off-leash exercise area is in an undeveloped section of the Park (See Exhibit "A.") The design is attached as Exhibit "B".

(d) The Plan of improvements shall comprise, as follows:

- (1) The Project will result in the construction of a dog off-leash area that is approximately 0.72 acres. The existing substrate, turf and mulch, would continue to serve as the substrate. Perimeter fencing, several seating areas, waste disposal containers, and a water fountain are also part of the design.
- (2) Access to the dog off-leash area would be gained from the existing pathways in the Park. Double entry gates will aid in control of unleashed dogs that might run into the park.
- (3) The location of the dog off-leash area was selected due to the Park's existing trees, which will provide shade, as well as the proximity to the train tracks, which help negate the noise issue.
- (4) The Project will not impact any trees.

(e) The Project described above and as otherwise depicted in the attached exhibit, is consistent with park, playground, recreation, and conservation purposes.

(f) The Council desires to approve the Plan for the Project described above and as depicted in Exhibit A.

SECTION 2. The Council hereby approves the Plan for replacement and construction of improvements in Lucy Evans Baylands Nature Interpretive Center and hereby adopts the Plan attached hereto as Exhibit "A" as part of the official plan for the construction of improvements in Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center.

SECTION 3. The City Council finds that this ordinance falls under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) exemption found in Title 14 California Code of Regulations Section 15301 because it consists of the repair and maintenance of existing facilities, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing prior to the improvements.

SECTION 4. This ordinance shall be effective on the thirty-first day after the date of its adoption.

INTRODUCED:

PASSED:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTENTIONS:

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

APPROVED:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Senior Deputy City Attorney

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Manager

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Community Services

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Administrative Services

Peers Park Dog Off-Leash Exercise Area- Exhibit A



