

TO: PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

FROM: PUBLIC WORKS

DATE: JULY 26, 2022

SUBJECT: PARK IMPROVEMENT ORDINANCE: MITCHELL PARK DOG PARK RENOVATION PROJECT

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission provide a recommendation to City Council to adopt the Park Improvement Ordinance (PIO) for the Mitchell Park Dog Park Renovation Project (Attachment A).

BACKGROUND

The City of Palo Alto's [Parks Master Plan](#) includes a policy (2.D) recommending the addition of dedicated, fenced dog parks distributed throughout the city. The City Council prioritized expansion of dog parks as a city goal in 2017 with the adoption of Parks Master Plan. There are currently four existing dog parks in the City – Mitchell Park (0.56 acres), Peers Park (0.84 acres), Greer Park (0.06 acres), and Hoover Park (0.14 acres). An ongoing Capital Improvement Project (PG-18001) was established for the expansion and enhancement of dog parks in 2018 providing funding of \$150,000 per project, funded by park impact fees. Staff completed the Peers Park Dog Park in 2018 and is now pursuing the Mitchell Park Dog Park improvements and expansion.

Staff reviewed the proposed improvements to the dog park in a community meeting held online on May 4, 2022 to obtain input. There were 30 participants. The community response to the proposed renovations was positive and supportive with suggestions to include hills/slope areas in the dog park, enlarge the dog park area as much as possible, add more seating/benches, and fix the drainage issues. These suggestions have been incorporated into the proposed plan.

A project webpage has been created where the community can learn more about the Mitchell Park Dog Park Renovation Project(<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/dogparks>).

DISCUSSION

On June 28, 2022 the Parks and Recreation Commission reviewed the proposed plans with revisions made per community comments. The Commission was supportive of the expansion plans and provided the following comments that were addressed in the plan presented for the Parks Improvement Ordinance. These revisions included: the reduction of the small dog park fence height to 3' and the addition of 15 new native trees, a mix of Valley Oaks and California Sycamores to the area for shade and habitat.

The Park Improvement Ordinance (PIO) (Attachment 'A') for the Mitchell Park Dog Park Project includes the following items:

- (1) Expand the size of the existing dog park area with new 5' tall chain link fence
- (2) Install a new small dog park area with 3' tall chain link fence
- (3) Replace existing irrigation system
- (4) Replace existing mowed turf with 'no mow' grass to reduce maintenance
- (5) Add new site amenities including: bench seating and waste receptacles
- (6) Establish 10' set-back along Adobe Creek
- (7) Install new area drains
- (8) Plant new native trees

NEXT STEPS

- Parks and Recreation Commission Park Improvement Ordinance: Summer 2022
- City Council Park Improvement Ordinance: Summer 2022
- Bid Document Preparation & Project Bidding: Summer 2022
- Construction Begins: Fall 2022

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The proposed recommendations are consistent with Policy C-26 of the Community Services element of the Comprehensive Plan that encourages maintaining park facilities as safe and healthy community assets; and Policy C-22 that encourages new community facilities to have flexible functions to ensure adaptability to the changing needs of the community. The proposed recommendations are consistent with the [Parks Master Plan](#) Policy 2.D.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Park Improvement Ordinance

PREPARED BY

Chelsea Laxa
Project Engineer

Peter Jensen
Landscape Architect
City of Palo Alto

ORDINANCE NO. ____

Ordinance of the Council of the City of Palo Alto Approving and Adopting a Plan for Facility Improvements at Mitchell Park

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

SECTION 1. Findings and Improvements. 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) Mitchell Park (the “Park”) is dedicated to park purposes. (See Municipal Code section 22.08.180)

(c) The City intends to authorize the renovation and expansion of the dog park area.

(d) The plan of improvements shall comprise as follows:

- (1) Expand the size of the existing dog park area with new 5’ tall chain link fence
- (2) Install a new small dog park area with 3’ tall chain link fence
- (3) Replace existing irrigation system
- (4) Replace existing mowed turf with ‘no mow’ grass to reduce maintenance
- (5) Add new site amenities including: bench seating and waste receptacles
- (6) Establish 10’ set-back along Adobe Creek
- (7) Install new area drains
- (8) Plant new native trees

(e) Exhibit A depicts the expected implementation of the plan of improvements.

(f) The plan of improvements described above is consistent with park, playground, recreation, and conservation purposes.

(g) The City Council desires to approve the plan of improvements described above.

SECTION 2. The City Council hereby approves the plan of improvements in the Park described in this Ordinance.

SECTION 3. The City Council finds that this ordinance falls under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) exemptions found in Title 14 California Code of Regulations Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) and Section 15303 (New Construction of Small Facilities or Structures).

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:

Assistant City Attorney

City Manager

Director of Community Services

Exhibit A

Exhibit 'A' - Proposed Expansion Plan

Existing Dog Park Size:

24,263 sq.ft. or .56 acre

New Big Dog Park Size:

35,853 sq.ft. or .82 acre
(increase of .26 acres)

New Small Dog Park Size:

4,335 sq.ft. or .10 acre

Overall New Dog Park Size:

.92 acre (increase of .36 acres)

