



DISCUSSION ITEM

Agenda Item # 5

AGENDA REPORT SUMMARY

Meeting Date: October 26, 2021

Subject: Off-Leash Pilot Program Review and Recommendations

Prepared by: Donna Legge, Recreation and Community Services Director

Approved by: Gabriel Engeland, City Manager

Attachment(s):

1. Ordinance No. 2021-475: authorizing an off-leash pilot program at the Hillview Baseball Field and making findings pursuant to CEQA that the ordinance is categorically exempt from environmental review.
2. Resolution No. 2021-50: extending the off-leash pilot program at the Hillview Baseball Field and making findings pursuant to CEQA that the Resolution is categorically exempt from environmental review.
3. Dog Park Subcommittee Report for Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting on October 13, 2021.

Initiated by:
City Council

Previous Council Consideration:

February 12, 2019; November 10, 2020; February 9, 2021; and February 23, 2021, September 21, 2021.

Fiscal Impact:

None

Environmental Review:

Not applicable

Policy Question(s) for Council Consideration:

- Does Council want to discontinue the off-leash program at the Hillview Baseball Field and direct staff and the Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC) to explore additional fenced-in options for dogs in Los Altos.

Summary:

- In accordance with LAMC 5.08.010, dogs are prohibited to be off-leash in Los Altos parks
- Residents do not have a place to take dogs off-leash, legally, within the Los Altos community

Reviewed By:

City Manager

GE

City Attorney

JH

Finance Director

JE



Subject: Off-Leash Pilot Program Review and Recommendations

- Council approved a 6-month pilot off-leash hours program at the Hillview Baseball Field, with the adoption of Ordinance No. 2021-475, suspending the enforcement of LAMC 5.08.010, allowing dogs to be off leash during designated days and times
- The 6-month period (181 days) began on April 1, 2021, and is scheduled to end on September 27, 2021
- Council directed staff and the Parks and Recreation Commission to return to Council no later than 60 days after the end of the 181 days or no later than November 27, 2021
- Council approved Resolution No. 2021-50, extending the off-leash program from September 29, 2021, to November 14, 2021.
- The Parks and Recreation Commission evaluated the off-leash pilot program and recommended that the Hillview Baseball Field program be discontinued and further recommended that the PARC explore additional options for dogs in Los Altos, starting with concepts presented in Attachment 1 of the Dog Park Subcommittee's report from the October 13, 2021, PARC meeting.

Staff Recommendation:

Discontinue the off-leash program at the Hillview Baseball Field and direct staff and the PARC to explore additional fenced-in options for dogs in Los Altos.



Subject: Off-Leash Pilot Program Review and Recommendations

Purpose

To further explore additional fenced-in options to extend the ability to allow dog owners to have their dogs off-leash in one or more locations in Los Altos.

Background

At its regular meeting of November 10, 2020, Council received a presentation and recommendations from the Parks and Recreation Commission including the establishment of an off-leash hours pilot program at the Hillview Baseball Field for a period of nine (9) operational months, subject to COVID-19 guidelines. Council directed staff to return to Council with a 6-month, off-leash pilot period, including recommendations for program hours and an evaluation of the program.

On February 9, 2021, Council introduced the Hillview Baseball Field Off-Leash Pilot Program Ordinance and waived its reading with minor changes. In addition, Council provided input on the rules and directed staff to measure the success of the program with the following methods:

1. Feedback from residents and users regarding the program (survey)
2. Include impact of reduced unlawful activity – analyze data before and after pilot program
3. Evaluation of incidents reported to Animal Control and the Police Department
4. Evaluation of actual cost vs expected costs
5. Legal issues
6. Field conditions
7. Attendance

At its regular meeting of February 23, 2021, Council held a Second Reading of Ordinance No. 2021 -475. As amended, Council adopted the Ordinance to allow dog owners to have their dogs off-leash during the following days and times (Attachment 1).

April 1 to September 28 (6 months or 181 days per Ordinance)

<u>Days</u>	<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon/Evening</u>
Monday thru Friday	7 to 9 am	7 pm to 9pm

All City Park turf areas will be closed for annual maintenance from November 15, 2021, to January 31, 2022, including the Hillview Baseball Field.



Subject: Off-Leash Pilot Program Review and Recommendations

At its regular meeting on September 14, 2021, Council requested placement of an agenda item on the next agenda (September 21, 2021) to consider the extension of the Off-Leash Pilot Program at the Hillview Baseball Field.

At its regular meeting on September 21, 2021, staff presented a Resolution for Council’s consideration. Following discussion, Council directed staff to amend the Resolution, where applicable to insert specific extension dates and remove the language referencing “and until such time that the City Council receives a recommendation from the PARC and Council takes action.”

Resolution No. 2021-50 was adopted, extending the Off-Leash Pilot Program at the Hillview Baseball Field from September 29 to November 14, 2021, and making findings pursuant to CEQA that the Resolution is categorically exempt from Environmental Review (Attachment 2). In addition, Council indicated a desire to receive the recommendation from the PARC as soon as possible.

Discussion/Analysis

The Dog Park Subcommittee is made up of Vice Chair Teresa Morris and Commissioner John Corrigan. The Subcommittee has worked closely with Recreation and Maintenance staff to gather the following data to assess the overall success of the program.

Los Altos Police Department

Total CAD Events - means the total number of calls for service and/or officer-initiated contacts related to animals (leash law, bites, noise, etc.) during the time periods requested.

Reports - means that a police report was taken for an event.

Bites (D-H) - means a dog bit a human, **Bites (D-D)** means a dog bit another dog, **GOA** means “gone on arrival” (violators were gone upon PD arrival).

Patrol checks are not included in the total number of CAD Events in the chart below. There are a total of 15 patrol checks to assess leash law compliance at the Hillview Baseball Field between during the pilot period.

April 1 to September 28, 2021

Hillview Baseball Field	Total CAD Events	Leash	Bites D-H	Bites D-D	Noise	GOA	Citations	Warnings	Reports	Other
	11	8	1	0	1	3	5	0	0	1



Subject: Off-Leash Pilot Program Review and Recommendations

Notes:

- (1) police report was taken in 2020: Case #20-0124, person bitten 3x by a dog on the field. ACO responded and animal was quarantined
- (1) dog on human bite was noted in 2021: City employee was "nipped" by a dog - no injury and no report desired
- (1) event was listed as "other" in 2021: dog approaching another dog aggressively. The reporting party wished to document the incident to support the need for a fence to be installed
- (1) event was listed as a noise issue: dogs were reportedly barking for several minutes

Animal Control (Palo Alto Police Department)

Animal Control Officers (ACO) responded 42 times for patrol checks. Similar to LAPD, not all patrol checks are documented at other parks, however each patrol check at the Hillview Baseball Field have been documented.

(1) written warning was issued. During the pilot, ACO's issued 23 verbal warnings to groups of dog owners and individuals alike and focused on education while limiting close contact with the public due to COVID. Most warnings were issued just after off leash hours ended, and in the mid-afternoon.

(1) bite incident reported. Victim was a city parks worker; bite did not break skin. LAPD was first on scene.

Off-Leash Park Activity Analysis

The following information reflects the park activity reported by the Los Altos Police Department and Animal Control.

Police Department

April to September	2019	2020	2021
Hillview Baseball Field	1	1	11
Other Los Altos Parks	0	1	15

Animal Control

April to September	2019	2020	2021
Hillview Baseball Field	0	1	42
Other Los Altos Parks	1	7	5



Subject: Off-Leash Pilot Program Review and Recommendations

City Website Off-Leash Survey

The online survey was posted with a website link as well as a QR code on signs at the Hillview Baseball Field. There were 106 responses. Staff determined that the informal survey did not contribute significantly to the analysis of the off-leash pilot program.

Park Maintenance Staff

The maintenance crew observed and experienced the following maintenance concerns at the Hillview Baseball Field during the Off-leash Pilot Program:

- Dog waste that is left after dogs leave. Sometime discovered when mowing
- Dogs barking excessively
- Dogs running unleashed outside the off-leash area and outside of the designated times
- People taking excessive amounts of dog bags
- Damage to irrigation heads from dogs chewing
- Unsupervised dogs digging holes

Here are the maintenance concerns with the program going forward.

1. With the dogs being allowed to dig by their owners, there is extensive damage to the baseball field. It is presumed, that the field is currently not usable for baseball. Due to COVID-19, baseball was not utilizing the field in 2020 and 2021. There are concerns around being able to keep the field playable should dogs be allowed off-leash during the next 2022 baseball season. It most likely will be more expensive than anticipated due to the unanticipated extent of the damage, resulting in a significant rehabilitation.
2. A crew member had an incident, where a dog bit his pant leg. There was no injury or damage to his clothing, but we have had to modify the maintenance schedule to avoid putting staff in the off-leash area when it is open. There are limitations to avoiding the maintenance flow, but additional concerns would arise if the program hours were expanded, or additional sites are added.
3. The expense for dog waste cleanup bags has almost tripled from what was anticipated. While a reasonable number of bags were estimated, staff did not anticipate dog owners taking excessive amounts at one time. The staff has witnessed it and received many calls related to the bag dispensers being empty.



Subject: Off-Leash Pilot Program Review and Recommendations

At its regular meeting on October 13, 2021, the PARC received a presentation from the Dog Park Subcommittee including a summary, findings, and recommendations. The PARC recommended that Council discontinue the off-leash program and further recommended that the PARC explore additional options for dogs in Los Altos, starting with concepts presented in Attachment 1 of the Dog Park Subcommittee's report from the October 13, 2021, PARC meeting (Attachment 3).

Recommendation

The staff recommends the City Council discontinue the off-leash program at the Hillview Baseball Field and direct staff and the Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC) to explore additional fenced-in options for dogs in Los Altos.

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-475

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS
AUTHORIZING AN OFF-LEASH PILOT PROGRAM AT THE HILLVIEW
BASEBALL FIELD AND MAKING FINDINGS PURSUANT TO CEQA THAT
THE ORDINANCE IS CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT FROM
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

WHEREAS, the California Constitution, Article XI, Section 7, confers on the City the power to make and enforce within its limits all local, police, sanitary, and other ordinances and regulations not in conflict with general laws; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Los Altos Municipal Code Section 5.08.010, dogs are prohibited off-leash in Los Altos parks; and

WHEREAS, residents have expressed an interest in having a public place within the Los Altos community where dogs may be allowed off-leash; and

WHEREAS, the City's Parks and Recreation Commission has recommended an off-leash pilot program during specific days and hours; and

WHEREAS, City staff recommend a limited, temporary suspension of Los Altos Municipal Code Section 5.08.010 to facilitate a pilot program as recommended by the Parks and Recreation Commission; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to suspend Los Altos Municipal Code Section 5.08.010 as recommended by staff to facilitate a pilot off-leash program only at the Hillview Baseball Field; and

WHEREAS, the proposed pilot program is not anticipated to have any significant adverse effect upon the health, safety, welfare, or physical environment of the Los Altos community; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the temporary pilot program is to gauge the likely success and potential impacts of a more permanent community wide off-leash policy.

NOW THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Los Altos does ordain as follows:

SECTION 1. AUTHORIZATION OF PILOT PROGRAM: Notwithstanding any provision of the Los Altos Municipal Code including, without limitation, provisions of Los Altos Municipal Code Section 5.08.010, a pilot off-leash program is hereby established at the Hillview Baseball Field. Beginning on the effective date of this ordinance, as set forth in Section 8 hereof, dogs shall be allowed off-leash at the Hillview Baseball Field subject to the rules and regulations set forth in Section 2 of this ordinance.

SECTION 2. OFF-LEASH RULES AND REGULATIONS: The limited, temporary suspension of Los Altos Municipal Code Section 5.08.010 authorized in Section 1, above, shall be subject to compliance with the following rules and regulations:

- A. Dogs shall be allowed without physical restraint only in the outfield turf area of the Hillview Baseball Field generally depicted in **Exhibit A** hereto.
- B. Off-leash use shall be limited to the hours of 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. Sunday through Saturday, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.
- C. No pet or domesticated animal shall be allowed to participate in the off-leash pilot program established by this ordinance except for dogs that are: (1) subject to the reasonable control of their owners or handlers, (2) properly licensed pursuant to applicable law, and (3) not “vicious” as defined by Los Altos Municipal Code Section 5.04.005.
- D. Owners and handlers shall clean up after their own dogs and shall keep their dogs under reasonable control as necessary to ensure the safety of people and pets and to prevent destruction of property.
- E. Owners and handlers shall comply with every regulation for use of the park established by the City Manager as set forth in Section 3.
- F. In the use of the park as authorized by this ordinance, owners and handlers shall obey every lawful instruction of any peace officer or of the City Manager or designee.

Any violation of the foregoing rules shall constitute an unlawful violation of Los Altos Municipal Code Section 5.08.010.

SECTION 3. CITY MANAGER AUTHORITY: The City Manager may establish additional rules and regulations for off-leash use of the Hillview Baseball Field. Such rules shall become effective immediately upon being posted at the park and made available for review by members of the public at the official website of the City’s Recreation and Community Services Department and Municipal Maintenance Services Department. If the City Manager finds that the off-leash pilot program is creating a significant adverse effect upon the health, safety, welfare, or physical environment of the Los Altos community, the City Manager may suspend the off-leash pilot program by posting notice of such suspension at the baseball field and online at the official website of the City’s Recreation and Community Services Department and Municipal Maintenance Services Department. Unless sooner rescinded by the City Manager or overruled or extended by the City Council, such suspension shall remain in effect until the later of 21 days following the suspension or the day after the next regular meeting of the City Council.

SECTION 4. SUNSET: Unless extended by resolution of the City Council, this ordinance shall expire automatically and shall be of no further force and effect beginning on the 181st day after the effective date hereof. Nothing herein is intended to prohibit the City Council from repealing this ordinance sooner. Staff and the Parks and Recreation commission shall

return to the City Council no later than 60 days after the end of the 181 days of the pilot program.

SECTION 5. CONSTITUTIONALITY. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of this code is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this code.

SECTION 6. CEQA. The City Council finds the adoption of this ordinance to be exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15061(b)(3) (Common Sense Exemption), 15301 (Existing Facilities), 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land), 15305 (Minor Alterations to Land Use Restrictions), and 15306 (Information Collection), in that the pilot program established hereby is not anticipated to have any significant adverse impact upon the existing environment, will be temporary in nature, will involve the use of an existing recreational facility, will not significantly alter existing facilities or existing land use restrictions, and is intended primarily to study the impacts of off-leash programs to inform future policy choices. The City Council also finds that none of the exceptions set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 to the availability of the foregoing categorical exemptions applies to the program or project authorized by this ordinance. The City Manager or designee is hereby directed to prepare and file a notice of exemption in connection with this ordinance, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15062.

SECTION 7. PUBLICATION. This ordinance shall be published as provided in Government Code section 36933.

SECTION 8. EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance shall be effective upon the commencement of the thirty-first day following the adoption date.

The foregoing ordinance was duly and properly introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Los Altos held on February 9, 2021 and was thereafter, at a regular meeting held on February 23, 2021 passed and adopted by the following vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

Neysa Fligor, MAYOR

Attest:

Andrea Chelemengos, CMC, CITY CLERK

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-50

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS
EXTENDING THE OFF-LEASH PILOT PROGRAM AT THE HILLVIEW
BASEBALL FIELD, AND MAKING FINDINGS PURSUANT TO CEQA THAT
THE RESOLUTION IS CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT FROM
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

WHEREAS, the California Constitution, Article XI, Section 7, confers on the City the power to make and enforce within its limits all local, police, sanitary, and other ordinances and regulations not in conflict with general laws; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Los Altos Municipal Code Section 5.08.010, dogs are prohibited off-leash in Los Altos parks; and

WHEREAS, residents have expressed an interest in having a public place within the Los Altos community where dogs may be allowed off-leash; and

WHEREAS, the City's Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC) recommended an pilot off-leash program during specific days and hours; and

WHEREAS, City staff recommended a limited, temporary suspension of Los Altos Municipal Code Section 5.08.010 to facilitate a pilot off-leash program as recommended by PARC; and

WHEREAS, on February 23, 2021, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 2021-475 that suspended Los Altos Municipal Code Section 5.08.010 to facilitate a pilot off-leash program only at the Hillview Baseball Field; and

WHEREAS, the pilot off-leash program, if extended, is not anticipated to have any significant adverse effect upon the health, safety, welfare, or physical environment of the Los Altos community; and

WHEREAS, the Hillview Baseball Field will be closed November 15 through January 2022 for annual maintenance; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Ordinance No. 2021-475, the pilot off-leash program is scheduled to terminate on September 28, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to extend the pilot off-leash program between September 28, 2021, and November 14, 2021.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Los Altos as follows:

SECTION 1. Pursuant to Ordinance No. 2021-475, Section 4, the pilot off-leash program at Hillview Baseball Field shall be extended from September 28, 2021 until November 14, 2021

SECTION 2. CEQA. The City Council finds the adoption of this Resolution to be exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15061(b)(3) (Common Sense Exemption), 15301 (Existing Facilities), 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land), 15305 (Minor Alterations to Land Use Restrictions), and 15306 (Information Collection), in that the pilot off-leash program established hereby is not anticipated to have any significant adverse impact upon the existing environment, will be temporary in nature, will involve the use of an existing recreational facility, will not significantly alter existing facilities or existing land use restrictions, and is intended primarily to study the impacts of off-leash programs to inform future policy choices. The City Council also finds that none of the exceptions set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 to the availability of the foregoing categorical exemptions applies to the program or project authorized by this Resolution. The City Manager or designee is hereby directed to prepare and file a notice of exemption in connection with this Resolution, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15062.

SECTION 4. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Resolution No. 2021-50 shall be effective upon adoption.

The foregoing Resolution was adopted on September 21, 2021, by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Lee Eng, Weinberg, Vice Mayor Enander and Mayor Fligor
NOES: Council Member Meadows
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None



Neysa Fligor, MAYOR

Attest:



Andrea Chelemengos, MMC, CITY CLERK

City of Los Altos
Parks and Recreation Commission

Dog Park Subcommittee Report and Recommendations

Date of Meeting: Thursday, October 13, 2021
 To: Park and Recreation Commission
 From: Commissioners John Corrigan and Teresa Morris
 Subject: Review of Hillview Baseball Field Pilot Program and Recommendations

BACKGROUND:

The potential of off-leash dogs in Los Altos parks has been a discussion for well over ten years. It was the goal of the Parks and Recreation Dog Park Subcommittee, past and present, to attempt to provide a possible solution for Los Altos dog owners to have a public space for their dogs to run freely and legally. After numerous Park and Recreation Commission meetings, resident workshops (residents voted and provided input regarding both off-leash and fenced in locations and features), the decision to provide an off-leash Pilot Program at the Hillview Baseball Field was approved by City Council on February 23, 2021.

On April 1, 2021, the off-leash Pilot Program began at Hillview Baseball Field. The Pilot Program ran for 6 months, ending on September 28, 2021. This report will include information pertaining to the Pilot Program only and will not include the extended program that was approved by City Council on September 21, 2021.

Definition of dog parks:

The following definitions were established by the PARC during the public workshop processed, facilitated in February 2020.

Fenced-in Dog Park - A fenced-in dog park is defined as an enclosed and dedicated area, which is often divided into two separate areas, one for larger/more active dogs and the other for smaller, shyer dogs. Dogs run off-leash in these dog parks. A fenced in dog park is typically open from sunrise the sunset.

Off-Leash Hours - An off-leash hours program is defined as an unenclosed area where dogs can run but the owner(s) must manage their dogs so that they do not go beyond the designated off-leash areas, unless they are leashed.

Goals:

The goal of this report is to provide an assessment of the Hillview Off-Leash Pilot Program (Pilot Program) and to provide recommendations for PARC's consideration. The assessment is based on criteria provided by City Council, observations during Pilot Program, and resident feedback.

DISCUSSION:

Los Altos has a vigorous and involved dog owner presence. The Subcommittee has been honored to meet with and hold discussions with many people regarding the Pilot Program.

Los Altos parks are small and few. They are identified as Neighborhood Parks because they are small and intended to serve the neighborhoods, they are in. The neighborhood parks about many homes including the Hillview Baseball Field.

Although the Pilot Program was successful in bringing the community together and allowing access for dogs to run off leash, it negatively impacted neighbors and did not meet the City Council off-leash criteria or the spirit of the 2012 Park Plan criteria for dog parks.

Despite the challenges of the Pilot Program, much was learned. The Subcommittee recommends that the city staff, PARC and Council use the lessons to continue an ongoing discussion and exploration of options within Los Altos where dogs can be allowed safely off-leash with a minimum impact to residents and staff.

City Council Criteria to evaluate Off-leash Pilot Program:

- Feedback from residents regarding the program (online survey and other)
- Impact of reduced unlawful activity (before and after pilot)
- Review of incidents reported to Animal Control and Los Altos PD
- Analysis of actual cost versus expected cost
- Legal issues
- Field conditions
- Attendance and usage

The Subcommittee has measured the success of the Pilot Program based on the criteria and is summarized below.

2012 Park Plan

In planning for a dog park, certain criteria should be met before designing such a park. At a minimum, a site should include:

- Sufficient room for off-leash activities for dogs of all sizes (at least one-half acre)
- Sufficient parking for park uses
- Sufficient buffer between the park and surrounding residential areas to mitigate impact from the park on homes

None of the parks in Los Altos, as presently constituted, meet all of these criteria. As such, a site outside of the current park system that includes all of the above criteria should be identified before funds are allocated for a dog park.

SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

Based on the findings of the 6-month pilot program, the Dog Park Subcommittee recommends that the PARC discontinue the off-leash program at the Hillview Baseball Field and that the Subcommittee continue to work with staff to explore more options for dogs to be off-leash in Los Altos.

Feedback Sources:

1. City online survey
2. Door-to-door neighborhood visits by Subcommittee
3. Emails received from the public
4. Los Altos Police Department
5. Palo Alto Animal Control
6. City Park Maintenance Review

Findings based on Feedback:

1. The feedback system (online survey) did not capture information on non-dog owners. Many dog owners were unaware of the survey unless shared by the Subcommittee during site visits. Most people want more hours at the park. Participants suggested a fence to allow for those without dogs, or those walking by, to enjoy the park.
2. The results are almost evenly split, as it was prior to implementation of the Pilot Program. Part of the community supports off-leash and part does not support off-leash. This outcome has remained constant across all attempts to find a solution to having dogs off-leash, or not, in Los Altos parks.
3. The Subcommittee recommends that the City consider conducting a comprehensive scientific survey to capture both off-leash participants and non-participants before moving ahead with any off-leash program recommendation.

Measurement of Success by City Council Directed Criteria**Impact of Reduced Unlawful Activity:**

Non-compliance with Designated Hours Neither staff, nor the Subcommittee, saw a reduction of unlawful activity in any Los Altos parks during the Pilot Program. In fact, there was a significant increase in unlawful activity at the Hillview Baseball Field. Often dog owners accessed the area before and after the designated hours. Off-leash usage was observed 69% of the time during visits outside of authorized hours by the Subcommittee.

Enforcement The stated overall intent during the pilot was to create an atmosphere of working together and education. During the pilot, Animal Control had discussions with dog owners explaining what the rules were and what the expectations were for off-leash activity.

Unfortunately, that approach did not address the dog owners that chose to ignore the rules of the Pilot Program. Dog owners admitted they would wait until Animal Control was off duty before they allowed their dog's off-leash outside of the sanctioned hours. Stronger enforcement, with fines imposed, should be considered for any potential future program.

Review of Incidents reported to Los Altos Police Department and Animal Control:

There was a noticeable increase in service calls to Los Altos Police and verbal warnings issued by Animal Control in 2021 at Hillview Baseball Field as compared to 2020 at Hillview Baseball Field. The increase was 5x that of the prior year.

The Subcommittee observed dogs escaping the Hillview perimeter during 16% of the 43 visits when at least one dog was present, increasing to 22% of 27 visits since mid-July (after part of the perimeter fencing was removed). The frequency of escape was likely higher than this since Subcommittee visits were generally brief. Finally, dog attacks were an issue during the Pilot Program.

- One person was bitten in the pant leg and filed a complaint.
- A cyclist respondent to the City's website survey reported being charged 3 times by a terrier.
- A Subcommittee member, along with a maintenance worker, was pinned for minutes by an off-leash dog. No owner responded during the incident.
- A resident reported at the 9/21/21 City Council meeting that he was intimidated by a dog three times.
- Additionally, 3 dog-on-dog attacks were reported, though it's unconfirmed if any occurred during approved hours.

Costs/Fiscal Impact:

The Off-Leash Pilot Program was estimated to cost \$6,275. That amount included community outreach, initial installation of off-leash rules and hour signs, designation of off-leash area with A-frames, dog bag dispensers, and dog bag refills for a 6-month period. The amount was to be absorbed by the Park Maintenance operations budget.

Actual costs must be provided by Maintenance and Staff, but it is known that costs have exceeded the original cost estimate due to waste bag usage and mid-program sign changes.

Legal Review:

There were attacks and issues that arose during the Pilot Program. Many did not come to light until close to the end of the Pilot Program. Legal matters are outside of the purview of the Subcommittee or PARC. The City Attorney and Risk Manager will provide input on an as needed basis.

Field:

Despite efforts, wear and tear on the field is a concern. Dog owners did an excellent job of keeping dogs off the infield. However, other areas of the field are showing a great deal of wear, including holes, worn spots, uneven turf and brown patches. Park entries and exits are worn.

There were reports that the field was too wet and too dry after responding to drought guidelines. According to Maintenance, the two issues could exist simultaneously, as less water often equals more compacted soil. More compacted ground could lead to more water sitting on the surface and not penetrating the soil. This situation lacks a definitive answer regarding the wet and dry conditions. Unless California sees a consistent break in the drought in the future, compromised greening of the grass and compacted soil will become the new normal. It is likely that grass will become obsolete as water becomes scarcer. This is something to consider if the off-leash discussion continues.

Neighbors, staff, and Subcommittee members all agree that the field is in poor shape when compared to past years. The most often cited concern regarding the wear and tear included, fear of Little League's not having a safe and sanitary place to play their games, and a loss of open green space for all to enjoy. Dog owners voiced their concerns about the field's not being maintained. Staff confirmed that they have been maintaining the field at the same level as if the off-leash program was not present.

The Subcommittee's assessment of other parks in Los Altos in early July showed that Hillview's deep ruts (average of 7.5 on 6/16 and 6/23) were 7.5x the average of 1 deep rut/park across Heritage Oaks, Grant Park, Hillview soccer field, North Lincoln, and South Lincoln parks, several which are substantially larger areas than Hillview. Only Rosita baseball field/Covington had more deep ruts (10), and Rosita is a much larger field than Hillview Baseball Field.

Dog waste was infrequently noticed by Subcommittee members during walkthroughs. Maintenance staff reported that one resident voluntarily cleans up every morning, as does staff.

Finally, the Pilot Program is not an accurate assessment of what the field would be like if Little League were using it for their practice and games because Covid-19 halted Little League use.

Attendance and Usage:

Attendance increased significantly as the Pilot Program progressed. Observations were made that dog owners were enthusiastic, welcoming, and very social. A supportive and self-policing system developed over time. There were a few owners that clearly kept a sharp eye on all dog activity and informed those not noticing their dog's activities.

Despite the efforts to control the dogs, the program produced noise and negative impacts to nearby homes. Some expressed a loss of privacy and ability to enjoy their homes and yards.

The Program attracted an average of 13 people per day by end of Pilot Program. There could be up to 23 dogs, plus their 1 to 2 dog owners on the field at one time. Specifically, the average

evening attendance: July: 5, August: 8, September: 13. Average morning attendance (8-9 AM): August: 6, September: 13.

The consistent totals represent a small portion of the overall dog owner population. That population is estimated at 35-40% of Los Altos households. The attendance outcome is consistent with comments made prior to the Pilot Program. It was said that, although people have dogs, they do not want to take them to off-leash parks. The result of the door-to-door survey showed that most neighbors who did not take their dogs' off-leash still support people who want off-leash parks. They simply do not use them with their dogs.

It is surmised that each park in Los Altos has approximately 5-15 people who visit their nearby park and allow their dogs off-leash. If one generously expands that number to 25 for each park, there are approximately a total of 200-250 people using Los Altos Parks for off-leash activity. This total use matters when considering noise, wear and tear, cost, and impacts to neighbors and maintenance.

Closing Discussion:

The Subcommittee recognizes the outcome of happy dog energy and happy dog owners during the Pilot Program. In addition, there has been a great deal of emotion connected to discussions surrounding the potential outcome of off-leash dog hours in Los Altos Parks. The Program has included a fair number of challenges. The recommendation is to stop the off-leash activity until further effort is made to remedy the problems and reflect the concerns. However, the recommendation to continue the discussion and pursue a solution reflects the desire of dog owners and others to secure an off-leash space in Los Altos. Lessons from the successes and challenges of the Pilot Program are what makes for a successful Pilot Program. Utilizing the discoveries as tools when moving ahead with any decision is crucial. The Subcommittee is prepared to continue their work and has captured additional ideas and evaluation as tools to be used in the next steps in the process (Attachment 1).

Finally, the Subcommittee recommendations are a result of being mindful of all resident input. The input considered includes emails, surveys, petitions, workshop results, and public comments shared at PARC meetings, as well as numerous City Council meetings. The Subcommittee deemed it necessary to consider all these avenues of input to be responsive to residents. Many residents, over many years, have been generous in their time and thoughtful responses to this very energizing and, at times, divisive discussion. Many of the same residents have shared their concern that their voices are not being heard and that they feel they must constantly be vigilant about sharing their concerns. It is for this reason that the Los Altos Dog Park Subcommittee sought to consider all resident input when making the recommendation regarding next steps for off-leash in Los Altos Parks. The subcommittee respectfully submits their above recommendations for your review and discussion.

Attachment:

- 1 - Tools for Next Steps
- 2 - Dog Park Subcommittee Power Point

Tools for Next Steps

The following notes and ideas will be used if the Dog Park Subcommittee continues efforts regarding off-Leash activity in Los Altos.

Further Evaluation:

1. Fence Dog owners as well as neighbors unanimously agree that a fence along the perimeter to separate the dogs from the walkways nearby, is required.

The opposition to fenced-in dog parks was consistently shared via surveys (both City sponsored, and resident driven) and PARC workshops. There remains great enthusiasm amongst some for a fenced-in option.

Note: the option of a perimeter fence or separation fence, does not ensure that the shared use concept will work. Should an off-leash program move forward with a perimeter fence, it is recommended to implement another pilot program for 3 months' time.

2. Hygiene Many are concerned that heavy use by dogs will create a hygiene issue for children and others, including dogs, using the shared space. When the field is mowed, feces are occasionally being mowed as well. Those feces are then spread, not only on the field, but also up toward the maintenance employee doing the mowing.
3. Hours It has been observed that dog owners stay until dark, and beyond. The dog owners have shared that, even with headlamps, they cannot see their dogs' feces, and it is often left. Park staff check prior to mowing, but can be difficult to find all the droppings on the field. It is recommended that the rules be changed in such a way there is no use after dark.
4. General Park Use There appears to be a decrease in the number of general non-dog owner park users. It is presumed that because the dog owners are extending the hours on their own accord, it likely is having a negative impact on overall use.
5. Aggressive Dogs Due to the presence of aggressive dogs, people are no longer using the park walkways. They are choosing instead to walk around the entire park to reach their destination. Some, with limited mobility, have curbed all use of the walkway for fear of dogs charging or approaching them.

General Improvements for any potential shared off-leash location:

- Perimeter fencing that separates and protects pedestrians, bicyclist, and dogs on leash from off-leash dog activity.
- Fencing that includes excellent sound barrier features to protect all nearby residents from all noise generated from the off-leash dog activity. This includes barking dogs and loud talking and yelling of dog owners.

- Dogs must not be allowed off-leash and must go on leash if other park users are present.
- Ramped up enforcement.
- Posted feedback mechanism that allows for non-online options, as well as grabs the attention of non-dog owners.
- Permitting system to register dogs and have dog handler sign a use agreement that details what their responsibilities are when using the dog park.
- Shut down off-leash if complaints reach a threshold. For example: If total complaints for LAPD and/or Animal Control are twice the amount of 2021. Additionally, if one dog on human bite occurs, where skin is broken, in a calendar year.
- Limit time each dog handler can spend in the park. Suggested limit is 30 minutes. There could be a sign in board or a clock like they use at tennis courts.
- No more than N dogs ($N \leq 3$ dogs) off-leash at a time and no more than N dog owners ($N \leq 5$ dog owners) at a time
- Proposed hours
 - 8-10 AM
 - 4:30-8 PM
- Exclude dogs that are “potentially dangerous” (§ 5.04.005)
- Entrance and exits
- For dogs exercise, not large social gatherings
- Nearness of vehicles
- Spread around the city/not destination
- Maximum setbacks
- Used solely for dogs

Note: The proposed reduction of dog totals is due to observations showing that more dogs equal more noise and off-leash challenges. It is also an attempt at keeping numbers down, even if people decide to increase the numbers illegally. In other words, by keeping the legal numbers low, it will potentially limit the potential for greater abuse.

Alternative scenarios and guidelines

No perimeter fencing

1. Allow off-leash activities in all City parks, if all off-leash rules are met with the following criteria:
 - Activity is confined to 8a.m.-5p.m. during winter months and 8a.m.-8p.m. in the summer months (or not past the ability to see and clean up feces, whichever comes first).
 - No dogs are allowed off-leash when other park users are present. This includes, but is not limited to, dogs on leash, people engaged in any activity in the park; be it sitting, sports activity, playground use, strolling, running, walking their dog on leash. This rule would apply whether said activity is present upon arrival or occurs during the off-leash activity. If a park is being used by anyone, prior to, or during the off-leash activity, the dog(s) must immediately be leashed.

2. Rotating Off-Leash Program: choose 3 to 4 parks, distributed across the city that will provide walking access to a nearby park for legally off-leash activity. Rotating the activity will distribute the burden of wear and tear and noise experienced by neighbors. Knowing a situation is short term (suggestion is a one-week rotation period) may be more reasonable for residents. The conditions for off-leash use are the same as described in *no perimeter fencing scenario one*, except that only a subset of parks is authorized for rotating off-leash use.

Alternatives with fencing

1. Explore and implement a large fenced-in dog park that is non-residential and will accommodate off-leash activities.
2. Parking lot area near the soccer field and the Friends of the Library portable. This space would work well, especially if a small section of the perimeter of the unused soccer field was included. The large heritage oak must be protected from all dog activity. The surface would need to be changed to artificial turf including a fence. This location does not appear to impact neighbors. The Subcommittee recommends a sound wall as a precaution. A con to this location is loss of parking.
3. Utilize the less-developed areas, such as the space between the History Museum and the shaded dugout section along the 3rd base side of the Hillview Baseball Field. A con is its proximity to the side of the History Museum and the loss of sidewalk. Pro is the ability to encourage parking on the Civic Center campus, not in neighborhoods and the ability to install gates for entrance and exits.
4. Undeveloped area on the east side of the new Community Center. Con is flow of dogs from parking lot to the location, and the potential for flow from all sides of the Community Center, which may be disruptive to classes, events and playground use at the Community Center. Location may damage the soil and adversely affect flow of water to plants. Close to neighbors that should be consulted first. Space would need to be tested through a Pilot Program. The Pro is that it is an open space that may otherwise be underutilized. The trees would need to be fenced off for their protection. This option would require less fencing and less surface changes.
5. Move the Tot playground in front of LAYC to a new location and create a fenced area that includes that area, as well as the grass and sidewalk area along the side of LAYC. Cons are minimal but may include noise impact to LAYC activities/office space. It would change the flow of pedestrian traffic on sidewalks. Pro is very visible dog area that might draw visitors to our town and lack of residential neighbors. Heritage oak tree and picnic table should be preserved.
6. The area that currently houses the brown library portables between the History Museum and the police station. Drawbacks to this option are proximity to the History Museum, size of space, and need to protect heritage oak trees. One Pro is the soil is a good surface for dogs to run, and, if desired, a good surface to install artificial turf.
7. Use the roadway alongside LAYC and the Police Department. Con is that it changes the flow of traffic and necessitates tearing out road. Also, same potential noise impact on LAYC and additional (minimal) potential impact on the library.

8. Create a long and narrow space along the bottom of the soccer field. Drawbacks to this location are that it's slightly near homes on Hillview Avenue and results in the loss of green space.
9. Carve out a smaller portion of Hillview Baseball field (closer to the Community Center). Cons: no guarantee to protect neighbors from noise and loss of baseball field (might be able to change location of infield). This option would *require* an effective sound wall along at least two sides of the field to alleviate impact on neighbors.
10. Parking lots: Create a large park downtown on one of the parking lot spaces. Best option is the area between Walgreens, Second Street, Third Street and Main Street (aka Plaza South). Pro is that it is a centrally located space, and it has plenty of room. It will create a lovely park opportunity in the middle of our downtown area. The space will serve the needs of the many new residents moving into our downtown area. A con is loss of some parking spaces.
11. Convert a portion of the maintenance yard at the front of McKenzie Park (the portion that was previously suggested to Friends of the Library).

Using Permitting to Create and Preserve Community:

The off-leash Pilot Program has been touted and praised as creating community. It is apparent in this day of Covid-19 and technology that any opportunity to create community is positive. The subcommittee recognizes that, due to the recommendations to limit the size of the number of dogs and dog owners allowed to congregate, the sense of community may be impacted. However, the main goal of an off-leash park is to allow dogs to get good exercise, not allow folks to congregate while allowing their dogs to roam free. During the off-leash pilot program, there have been reports of, and observations of, an ever-growing party-like atmosphere that includes consumption of alcohol, lack of attention to dogs, and lack of attention to noise levels during the Hillview Off-Leash Pilot Program. For that reason, the Subcommittee recommends that should off-leash programs become part of the future of Los Altos, the total amount of dogs and dog handler limits (see details in General Improvements above) be instituted. In addition, there needs to be a time limit to how long each individual dog handler is allowed to spend in the park at any given time of the day (see details in General Improvements above).

To mitigate the loss of the ability to congregate in large groups where dog owners mingle in a party-like atmosphere, it is recommended that there be the creation of a permit system to allow larger group gatherings of dog owners and their dogs. The permitting system could allow larger congregations monthly at a park, or parks, deemed appropriate for such use. It is recommended that there be a limit of 10-15 dogs maximum, as well as a restriction to total number of dog owners. Preference would be that the option to congregate with larger quantity of dogs be limited to permits issued to residents only, to include a cleaning deposit and conditions to ensure safety and minimize wear and tear of turf areas.

All details of such a permit would require staff and legal to discuss and plan. It would be ideal to include the Dog Park Subcommittee in at least the beginning conversations of any such permitting plan. Further, it is recommended that a time limit of 2 hours maximum be part of the permitting allowances. In addition, all applicable rules of the off-leash dog park would apply (if off-leash is approved) and regular rental of facilities will need to be adhered to.

Updated Rules:

Dog owners are required to follow the City's rules for off-leash use during designated hours, including:

- Failure to comply with the posted rules and regulations shall constitute a violation of M.C. 5.08.010 of the Los Altos Municipal Code. Violations can be reported to the Los Altos Police Department at (650) 947-2770.
- All dogs shall be licensed and vaccinated before entering the field area.
- Immediate clean up after your dog(s) is mandatory. Dispose of dog waste in the containers provided. (M.C. 5.08.010.B.1)
- Dog owners must be always in voice control of their dogs. Keep your dog(s) on leash leading into the off-leash area and out-side the field area and always keep a leash in hand to help control your dog.
- Dogs considered to be aggressive may be asked to leave. (M.C. 5.08.060)
- Puppies less than four months old are not permitted due to immature immune systems.
- Female dogs in heat are not allowed.
- All dogs must be spayed or neutered.
- A maximum of two dogs per handler is allowed at any time on the field.
- Children under 14 must be accompanied and supervised by an adult.
- Dog owners must prevent dogs from digging.
- Food and all alcohol is prohibited inside the field area.
- Training classes are not allowed.
- Access to off-leash area during weekday hours is subject to others being in the park, with or without dogs.
- The City of Los Altos assumes no liability for the users of these areas. Use these facilities at your own risk.
- You are subject to citation for off-leash activity outside of the days and times specified.

Note: The Subcommittee recommends the following be added to the rules. Remove the Vicious Animal definition, per the old rules (see included definitions below) and replace with Dangerous Animal. Allowing a dangerous animal to remain in the off-leash area would lead, and did lead (see above), to attacks. There was at least one repeat dangerous dog incident during the Pilot Program.

The following definitions are from Los Altos Municipal Code Section 5.04.005

“Potentially Dangerous Animal.” Any animal, except a dog assisting a peace officer engaged in law enforcement duties, which demonstrates any or all the following behavior, shall be presumed to be potentially dangerous:

1. Any animal which, when unprovoked, on two separate occasions within the prior thirty-six (36) month period, engages in any behavior that requires a defensive action by any person to prevent bodily injury when the person and the dog are off the property of the owner or keeper of the dog;

2. Any animal which, when unprovoked, bites a person causing a less severe injury than as defined in this section.
3. Any animal which, when unprovoked, on two separate occasions within the prior thirty-six (36) month period, has killed, seriously bitten, inflicted injury, or otherwise caused injury, attacking a domestic animal off the property of the owner or keeper the animal.

“Vicious Animal.” Any animal, except a dog assisting a peace officer engaged in law enforcement duties, which demonstrates any or all of the following behavior, shall be presumed to be vicious:

1. Any animal which, when unprovoked, in an aggressive manner, inflicts severe injury on or kills a human being.
2. Any animal previously determined to be, and currently listed as potentially dangerous, which, after its owner or keeper has been notified of this determination, continues the behavior described in this section, or is maintained in violation of Title 5.

Parks and Recreation Commission October 13, 2021

Hillview Off-Leash Hours Pilot Program



Dog Park Subcommittee
Evaluation

Parks
Make
Life
Better!



Agenda

- Pilot Description
- Evaluation of Pilot Criteria
- Pilot Pros and Cons
- Pilot Learnings
- Takeaways
- Alternatives
- Recommendation



Off-Leash Pilot Location/Hours

Hillview Baseball Field

April 1, 2021 through September 28, 2021

Off-leash Hours:

M-F: 7-9 AM, 7-9 PM; Sat-Sun: 7-9 AM, 5-9 PM

Follow the Rules

Basics:

Clean up after your dog

Keep barking/noise down

Keep dog under voice control

Mind the hours





Pilot Evaluation Criteria

Staff to measure success based on*:

- Feedback from residents and users
- Include impact of reduced unlawful activity
- Evaluation of incidents reported
- Evaluation of actual vs expected costs
- Legal issues
- Field conditions
- Attendance

***City Council (2/9/21)**

Evaluation Criteria: Feedback

Sources:

- Online Survey
- Door to Door Survey
- Emails
- Face to Face conversations

Online Survey Says...

- Non-random sample
- 86 residents and 8 non-residents responded
 - 85% of 40 residents were dog owners
 - 30 of 34 dog owners want to add off-leash hours to home park
 - 0 of 6 non-dog owners want to add off-leash hours to home park
 - Weighting results to match City dog owners: 67% don't want off-leash
- Conclusion
 - Failed to accurately represent both dog and non-dog owners in a significant manner
 - Prior surveys (2020, 2018) had similar issue (35-40% of Los Altos households are dog owners)



Top Responses to City Survey

- What is working well?
 - Nice to have a dedicated location to have their dogs off-leash (32)
- What is not working?
 - Hours are inconvenient or too short (47)
- How to improve the off-leash park?
 - Extended hours (42)
 - Install fences or gates (outfield and inner field) (32)

Door-to-Door Survey

Small sample: 21 homes visited/12 respondents

67% of respondents were dog owners

83% of respondents were aware of pilot

Door-to-Door Survey Questions

- Continue Off Leash?
- Affected?
- Used or Not?
- Where Else to Go?
- Benefits
- Issues



Reduced Unlawful Activity?

- No reduction in off-leash activity elsewhere
- 26 Subcommittee visits off hours
 - Off-leash use during 69% of visits
 - Heaviest unauthorized use: 9-10 AM and 4:30-7 PM

Incidents?

- Attacks
 - Dog on Human: 1 bite, 3 attacks, 1 close call, 4 confrontations
 - Dog on Dog: 3
- Police Reports: 5X service call increase
- Animal Control: 5X+ verbal warning increase
- Barking: 44%
- Dogs outside of field: 16% (22% recently)

Actual vs. Expected Costs

- Unexpected costs
 - Large increase in waste bags used
 - Additional cost for sign changes
- Unknown costs
 - During pilot (staff time, police, etc.)

Legal Issues?

- Two lawsuit threats and potential costs
- Dog on human bites/attacks
- Risk must be determined by City Attorney and Risk Manager

Field Conditions?

- Wear and tear
- Entrance pathways worn onto the field
- Ruts
- Dog waste

Mitigating factors:

- Marauding racoons
- Water reduced
- Lack of Little League impact

Hillview Field Schedule

Hillview Baseball Field - Spring/Winter (February to July)													
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday						
5am													
5:30am													
7am													
7:30am													
8am													
8:30am													
9am													
9:30am								Little League Games 9a-5p			Dog Obedience 18+ 9a-10a		
10am													
10:30am													
11am	Dog Obedience 18+ 10a-11a												
11:30am													
12pm													
12:30pm													
1pm													
1:30pm													
2pm													
2:30pm	Little League Practice 4p-7p	Little League Practice 4p-7p	Little League Practice 4p-7p	Little League Practice 4p-7p	Little League Practice 4p-7p	Little League Practice 4p-7p	Little League Games 9a-5p						
3pm													
3:30pm													
4pm													
4:30pm													
5pm													
5:30pm													
6pm													
6:30pm													
7pm													
7:30pm													
8pm													
8:30pm													
9pm													

* Park Closed for Annual Maintenance from Mid-November to January

Field Conditions Progression

April 17

ATTACHMENT 3



May 6



ATTACHMENT 3

May 6





ATTACHMENT 3

May 19



May 19



Aug 14

ATTACHMENT 3

Marauding
Raccoon
Activity



ATTACHMENT 3

September 12



Outfield Wear
and Tear

September 12



Access
Point

September 12

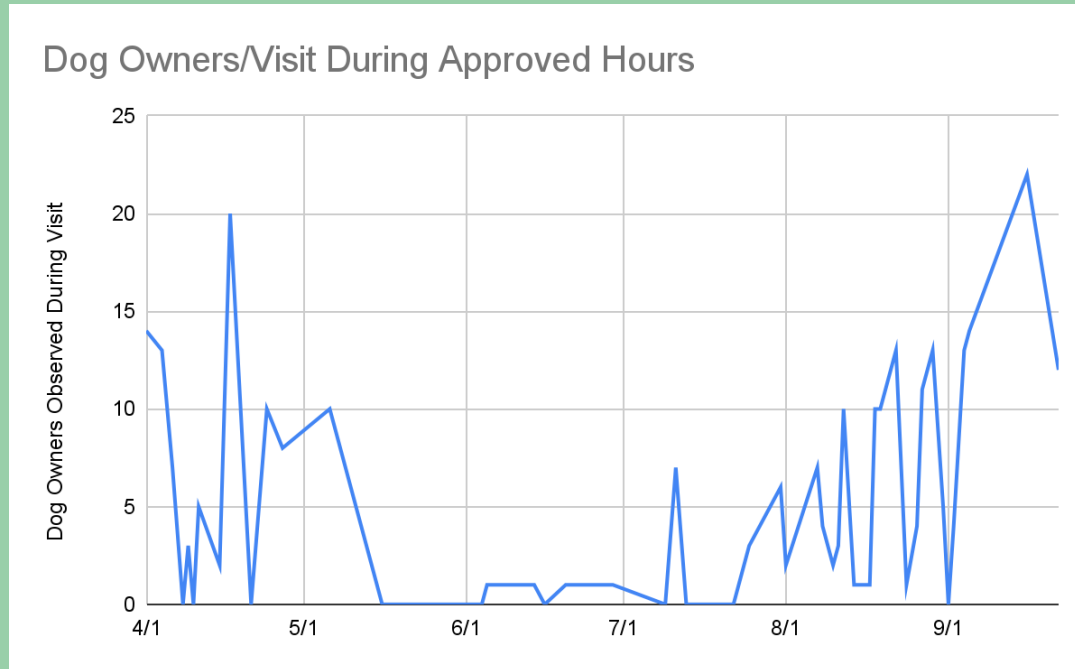


Access
Point

Attendance?

- People stayed close to home
- Later in pilot, less familiar dog owners
- Later in pilot, more small dogs
- Later in pilot, increase from ~ 5-10 to 10-20 dogs/owners
- Mostly a Los Altos crowd and 2/3 close to park
- Later in pilot, small increase in dogs driven to park

Attendance Increasing Over Last Two Months of Pilot



- **Average morning attendance (8-9 AM):** August: 6, September: 13
- **Average evening attendance:** July: 5, August: 8, September: 13



Pilot Criteria Summary

Pilot Criterion	Outcome
Resident Feedback	Yellow
Reduced Unlawful Activity	Red
Incidents	Red
Cost	TBD
Legal Issues	Yellow
Field Condition	Red
Attendance	Green

Pilot Summary: Pros

- Community building
- Consistent use
- Benefit to residents
- Minimal influx of non-Los Altos visitors
- Community self-policing





Pilot Summary: Cons

- Barking/noise
- Use outside of sanctioned times
- Field wear and tear
- Attacks on dogs and people
- Some pedestrians stopped visiting
- Neighbor issues
- Lawsuit threats
- No obvious decrease in off-leash elsewhere

What We Learned

- The pilot created its own behavior
- Dogs attacks will happen
- Leaders emerged
- Builds community
- Online survey didn't reach non-dog owners
- Hours mismatch
- Need plan to measure off-leash activity in other parks
- Modest use relative to dog owner population
- More users = more issues



Takeaways

- Characteristics of ideal off-leash locations
 - As much fencing as possible
 - Maximum set back from residences/pedestrians/cyclists
 - Location should be used minimally for other purposes
- Hours need modification
- Enforcement must be robust and not education focused
- Accurate costs needed



Potential Improvements for Future Off-Leash Programs

- Dogs must go on leash if others present
- Ramp up enforcement
- Posted feedback mechanism
- Off-leash shutdown parameters
- Permits for larger groups
- Time limits per dog owner
- Dog handler registration and signed use agreement
- Modify hours
- Dogs excluded if “potentially dangerous” (§ 5.04.005)
- Perimeter fencing
- Sound barrier features

Recommendations

The subcommittee requests that the following recommendations to be sent to City Council for approval:

- Discontinue off-leash program at the Hillview Baseball Field
- Subcommittee actively works with staff to further explore options for off-leash activity in Los Altos

Alternatives?

