

From: [John Crawford](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Public Comment, Agenda item #7, January 11,2022
Date: Thursday, January 6, 2022 1:35:36 PM

Dear City Council,

My German Shepherd and I really enjoyed the off-leash experience at Hillview Baseball Field.
Please restore this community resource, my dog and I are eager for the return.

Sincerely,
John Crawford and Zeus

265 Frances Drive
Los Altos, CA. 94022
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Bill Schneider](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT-AGENDA ITEM # 7 - January 11, 2022
Date: Thursday, January 6, 2022 5:15:21 PM

Honorable City Council:

I strongly support the off-leash program at Hillview. It is a valuable resource for dog owners, for the well-being of their dogs and for the sense of community between the people. That sense of community is something we need more of.

Sincerely,

Bill Schneider

Resident of Los Altos

Members of the City Council,

I wish to express my concerns on item 7 "Establishment of Permanent Dog Parks" on the agenda for the Jan 11, 2022 City Council meeting.

I am writing as both a 20+ year resident, and dog owner for all of those years. We visit McKenzie Park daily.

The agenda take as a given that Los Altos needs to have fenced-in dog parks. This is simply not necessary.

The issue has been brought up and studied for years, most recently with the Parks and Recreation subcommittee in their May 2020 report.

Each of these studies have indicated that a fenced-in dog park was not feasible.

McKenzie Park was the subject of the last studied location in South Los Altos.

From the May 2020 PARC subcommittee report:

"Therefore, given these considerations and the negative impacts that would result from making a portion of the park a fenced-in dog park site, the Subcommittee does not recommend a fence-in dog park at this location. Furthermore, the recent financial constraints on the City budget, as a direct result of the Corona virus, also gives reason to reject a fenced-in dog park at McKenzie Park. "

Nothing has changed since that study was done.

Los Altos simply does not have enough open space areas for our human residents.

Fencing in areas of our parks for the exclusive use for dogs is wrong.

We don't have the luxury of large swaths of open spaces such as in Mountain View Sunnyvale, and surrounding areas.

Our neighborhood parks are sized to accommodate the local neighborhood, not the entirety of the City population.

We need to preserve what we have for use by all residents.

I advocate off-leash hours at all appropriate parks be established.

This was attempted during the last pilot at Hillview. However that was done in one location only, putting an unfair burden on that area.

In that regard this was a flawed pilot program for the City in general.

A properly pilot requires off-leash programming at all appropriate parks.

Only then can meaningful data be collected for proper impact analysis and conclusions.

This option must be explored further before any other considerations.

This pilot could certainly be done under the PARC and provide a proper analysis for dog parks.

With regard to the specifics of the McKenzie Park location for the fenced-in location there are serious concerns.

The requirements for consideration include "Not on shared use field". In the analysis it also indicates that this site "does not displace or remove current amenities". However, this criteria is not met – as indicated later in the report – as there is the need to remove a climbing structure. This is in opposition to the criteria set forth.

In addition, the tennis courts in this area are used for City sponsored lessons, which may be negatively effected with direct proximity to the fenced dog park. This would result in loss of revenue should it become infeasible to hold lessons.

This area contains many trees and it is a uneven terrain that requires significant investment for creating a usable space for the dog area. A conversion would jeopardize the health of the mature Heritage trees, (redwood and Heritage oaks) in the area.

The area is also used by the staff, patients and residents of the nearby Los Altos Sub-acute facility. Losing access to the benches and tables poses an unnecessary hardship on those people, in addition to the loss of that use for others

The other area of McKenzie (East) mentioned is directly behind resident facilities. It is also another heavily used area by many groups, in particular during the non-winter months. The area is also used by the soccer program during the summer months, so any fenced in area would compromise space for that program.

In short, all of the areas of McKenzie are developed areas that used by the entire neighborhood, city residents and others.

It is disingenuous to remove existing open areas for all for the exclusive benefit of a few.

If Council finds (against all prior considerations) that a fenced in area is necessary surely other options are available.

A completely unused/vacant area can be made into a dog area. Ideally one that is not in a currently designated city park.

Thank You,
Derek Pitcher
Resident, Los Altos

Date: 2022_01_06

To: Honorable Members of the City Council: Mayor Enander, Vice Mayor Meadows, CM's Fligor, Lee Eng, and Weinberg, City Manager Gabe Engeland, City Attorney Jolie Houston, City Clerk Andrea Chelemengos

From: Jeanine Valadez

Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT 2022_01_11 Agenda Item 7 "Establishment of Permanent Dog Parks..."

Disclosure: I am a PARC commissioner but am writing this as a member of the public, as a Los Altos Homeowner since 1989, and as the Human Parent of Goldendoodle Hokulea, Yorkiepoo Boba, and Coton de Tulear Thor el Xipil.

Introduction:

First, I would like to thank the work put forth by City Staff in preparing the report attached to the meeting agenda. Several excellent options were suggested. Overall, I strongly support the recommendation for Hillview and Mackenzie-West; however, I hope to convince you of a more expansive and, thereby, more effective implementation, as described below.

I hope I have proven through my past public comments that am a strong supporter of fenced-in and properly gated dog parks. I am heartened by the strong community support for the Hillview location. At the same time, it is evident by reading and listening to all the Hillview supportive input that a great deal of self-interest exists in that community as to locality. In only one or two of the expressions of support, do I read or hear any regard for the establishment of dog parks throughout the city. I have tried to convince that group to expand their scope; I hope I can succeed at some point.

I am here to voice a more wholistic viewpoint, one that brings benefit to the whole City and not just a privileged few that live near the Hillview site.

Staff Report:

I am thankful that the City Council has made operational the establishment of dog parks. I am thrilled that Staff shows preference for at least two locations with feasibility for more. I support the two locations recommended by Staff (Hillview soccer-east and MacKenzie West). Yet, I suspect that with only two sites, and despite all the benefits that will accrue relative to our city's current state, that several negative effects will ultimately arm both dog park opponents and dog park users with valid complaints about the two dog parks after they are installed. These effects will likely include issues with congestion, destruction of the surfaces, increasingly soiled areas, and inaccessibility should limitations have to be placed on attendance due to wear-and-tear, congestion, and extended refurbishment downtimes.

The Benefits of Many Dog Parks Sooner:

Two parks are a great first step, but *the true value is in having many dog parks sooner than later*. A good analogy is to consider the topic of pickleball. The Pickleball Community has done a terrific job of educating us all about how their activity works. It is an activity dependent on a high density of courts at one location, not on the proliferation of small-density courts at many locations. When space is limited, they will sacrifice proliferation for increased density. Dog parks are the opposite scenario: they benefit by proliferation of sites across a large geography because proximity and variability are the things of

interest and importance to dogs and their owners (in terms of socialization and training). Dog owners will sacrifice size for proximity. Therefore, expanding the list of approved sites, and designing the proper management system alongside the dog parks, brings these strategic benefits:

- 1) Functional tuning: Dog parks can be of varying sizes and shapes: some tuned to free-roaming, some tuned to long-run-call-and-return, some tuned to small-group play or circuit work, some tuned to training and classes, etc. Fit the function to the site and space available; this fit will happen organically even if not specified or outfitted.
- 2) More walking: Ease parking and traffic requirements. Parking is still needed, though.
- 3) Shortened down-time: More parks will mean each park will stay in better shape as a result of reduced congestion, lessened wear-and-tear, and the added ability to establish rotating refurbishment/enhancement/shutdown periods (the latter is difficult at best with only two parks).
- 4) Fewer fiefdoms: By varying form, function, and up-time, community members will sometimes be invited to or required to visit further afield and get to know people/dogs outside their neighborhood. This is good for community. This will cross-pollinate neighborhoods and better socialize our dogs to many experiences, rather than enable their territoriality to one space (territorial behavior breeds aggression towards new members).
- 5) Less illegal off-leash use: Of course, some people will always violate the law, but offering many sites for legal use can justify stronger enforcement on the fewer remaining unregulated sites.

My Proposal:

Below, I share my vision for dog parks in Los Altos. I hope the City Council will endorse it. It is a progressive, incremental plan comprised of both permanent and temporary (evolving) elements. It is a strategic way to create an effective number of legal off-leash areas and, at the same time, cross-pollinate communities.

I urge the City Council to:

- 1) Approve the *immediate* permanent installation of these three (3) fenced-in and vestibule-gated dog parks, with the understanding that the final refinements as to features will be attained as budget allows:
 - a. Hillview soccer east – size as proposed
 - b. Mackenzie West – size reduced slightly to preserve the site of the current climbing structure which will be replaced with a new Inclusive Activity feature in the future (see PARC Inclusivity project suggestions); preserving that site provides a buffer between dog use and the tennis courts anyway.
 - c. Rosita Park – size as proposed pending user-community feedback, which may reduce the east-west scale for the park at no real loss of the utility of the dog park area (the size proposed in the report is quite large).
- 2) Approve the *immediate* installation of these three (3) *additional* temporarily-fenced and gated dog parks, two of which are per Staff recommendation. These sites would reduce load on the

permanent sites above and allow for further testing of neighbor-impacts of the locations below. (I maintain that testing of sites when congestion is an issue is not a good test.)

- a. Heritage Oaks – I favor Rosita over this park because Heritage seems to require more infrastructure development to create a permanent dog park.
 - b. Lincoln Park South (the portion of Lincoln Park south of the Chamber of Commerce)
 - c. Marymeade
- 3) Consider this note on Lincoln Park South: I do not understand why this park was eliminated from consideration. No rationale was included in the report. Lincoln Park South is more than well away from homes. The noise of Foothill will further cover for any dog park use. The existing berms can help ameliorate visual issues, as could additional hedges planted along the Lincoln Avenue side. There is plenty of parking. Dog parks do *not* have to be super large or square-shaped. A longish, slender fenced park here can be just fine for socializing dogs with call-and-return play and training. This park already suffers from a large amount of illegal off-leash use (there is poop everywhere). May as well outfit the function it currently provides with the proper fencing, gating, and management.
- 4) Direct Staff or the Parks and Rec Commission to conduct a study of the above three (3) temporary sites over 24 months to gauge community input, usage, and other stakeholder issues. Follow that study with another study to assess a temporary site at Grant. Continue this process until every possible greenspace is tested for dog park feasibility, including for housing developments as of yet unspecified. Convert temporary sites to permanent based on these studies.

By specifying and approving an expanded, more strategic plan on January 11, City Council will bestow great benefit on its human and canine community members; you will give us safe places to play with our dogs. You will, importantly, create the boundaries needed to protect those people who fear or are not ready for dogs. You will keep dogs safely away from places where they do not belong. And finally, you will earn the legacy for having transformed Los Altos into a dog-friendly city, something no Council before you has been able to do.* Over 40% of our city owns dogs; we're behind you; please make this happen.

Thanks for your time,

Jeanine Valadez

*at least not since I moved to Los Altos in 1989.

From: [Alon Amit](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT-AGENDA ITEM # 7 - January 11, 2022
Date: Thursday, January 6, 2022 9:44:17 PM

Honorable City Council,

I strongly support the off-leash program at Hillview. We have been visiting the park daily during off-leash hours throughout last year, and it has been a source of friendship and community building for our entire family. We made new friends, and even new professional connections, through the off-leash program, and we can't wait for it to be made available again.

Sincerely,
Alon Amit
Resident of Los Altos

From: [Joan Centofanti](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT-AGENDA ITEM # 7 - January 11, 2022
Date: Friday, January 7, 2022 11:29:04 AM

Honorable City Council,

I am very much in favor of having off-leash dog areas in Los Altos. Dogs are an important part of many Los Altos family lives and we need areas for them to run, play, exercise, and socialize with other dogs. Dogs who are well socialized are better members of the community and less likely to have problems interacting with other humans and their dogs.

We have lived in Los Altos for 31 years and I am certain that off-leash dog areas will be a plus for our community. I met a lot of new people this summer at the Hillview Baseball field and I feel a stronger bond to my community because of it. A dog park is also a great opportunity to teach our dogs better manners, both off-leash and on-leash and to practice coming when called, and greeting people with good manners.

I feel strongly that having an off-leash dog play area enriches our community and I am confident we can find a way to make this possible. It would be better to have the area fully fenced so that off-leash dogs don't run into the street or up to people and other dogs walking by. There are many committed neighbors, including myself, who are motivated to help the park be successful.

Thanks for seriously considering how to establish this important community-building activity for Los Altos.

Sincerely,

Joan Centofanti,

Resident of Los Altos

Bonnie Densmore
Patricia Densmore
Los Altos, CA 94022

January 6, 2022

Honorable City Council:

I strongly support the off-leash program at Hillview. This program is important to me because we are a dog-friendly community and should be able to offer a few places for dogs to run safely and freely as many larger and small cities do.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Densmore

Patricia Densmore

From: [Hillview Dog Park Preservation Society](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Re: PUBLIC COMMENT--AGENDA ITEM # 7 - January 11, 2022
Date: Friday, January 7, 2022 5:15:14 PM

Except for the public comment email address, all emails are bcc'd to protect against Brown Act violations and preserve privacy.

To: Mayor Anita Enander
Cc: City Council, City Manager, City Staff, and the City Admin
Bcc 1: The Hillview Dog Park Preservation Society (HDPPS) Steering Committee
Bcc 2: 397+ Los Altos Off-leash Dog Owners and Off-leash Supporters (This time I included the full HDPPS mailing list of Los Altos petitioners and other interested parties.)
Bcc 3: A founding member of the long-defunct "Los Altos Parks Dog Group" (LAPDoG), which was formed in 2003 to petition for off-leash parks in Los Altos. LAPDoG met with then-Mayor Francis La Poll, the Town Crier, and the 2003 Los Altos City Council. They also marched in the 2003 Los Altos Pet Parade.
Bcc 4: The Town Crier - for a heads up that we might make history next Tuesday
Bcc 5: The Los Altos History Museum - nearby neighbors to the proposed off-leash site and recorders of Los Altos History
Bcc 6: 3800+ Los Altos Dogs (Okay, just kidding on this one, but I'll bet they're praying along with HDPPS for good news for off-leash next Tuesday!)

Honorable Mayor Anita Enander,

Thanks for responding to our request for a meeting below with a phone call. I'm sharing your thoughts with the group listed above so that we're all on the same page. To support the City Staff's recommendation, you recommended that all interested parties:

1. Show up at next Tuesday's 1/11/22 City Council meeting, if possible
 - **Make sure to download the latest version of RingCentral [here](#)**
2. Plan to speak or cede minutes to other HDPPS members
3. Whether able to attend or not, email: publiccomment@losaltosca.gov with instructions [here](#) (Many thanks to those who have already emailed!)

HDPPS understands that opponents of off-leash will also have their say on Tuesday, and while we can't predict the outcome of the Council's discussions and vote, we're hopeful that the City Staff's thoughtful recommendation of using the "soccer-field-east" newly-reclaimed grass area at Hillview will convert opponents to proponents.

Keeping the faith and hoping Los Altos finally breaks on through to the other side of this almost-20-year effort!

Bette

--

Bette Houtchens
Steering Committee Member
The Hillview Dog Park Preservation Society

On Tue, Jan 4, 2022 at 10:32 AM Hillview Dog Park Preservation Society
<dogparkpreservationsociety@gmail.com> wrote:

To: Mayor Anita Enander,
Cc: City Council, City Manager, City Staff, and the City Admin
Bcc: Los Altos Off-leash Dog Owners and Off-leash Supporters

Honorable Mayor Enander,

First, a hopeful new year and congratulations and best wishes as the new Mayor of Los Altos.

Second, I'm writing on behalf of the Hillview off-leash community to request a meeting with you before the January 11th Council meeting.

Third, to respect everyone's precious time and minimize frustration, we want to coordinate meeting details with the City Admin *before* the Council meeting. With Omicron causing significant stress and illness in our immediate community - as well as in our extended families and communities across the globe - we need to be as efficient and respectful as possible.

We were very encouraged by the City Staff's work to develop thoughtful, viable alternatives on the Hillview site, and we hope to make the off-leash programming effort a solid win for everyone.

Please let us know your availability and thoughts. I will forward any response to my full distribution list.

Best regards,

Bette Houtchens
The Hillview Dog Park Preservation Society

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Bette Houtchens
Steering Committee Member
The Hillview Dog Park Preservation Society

From: [Phoebe Bressack](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Off leash dog park
Date: Friday, January 7, 2022 7:42:40 PM

I strongly support the town having an off leash dog park and also support the staff recommendation for it being at "soccer-field-east" newly-reclaimed grass area at Hillview, provided that low fencing can be installed to keep the dogs corralled:-)
Phoebe Bressack

From: [Zainab Siddiqui](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Cc: [Hillview Dog Park Preservation Society](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT-AGENDA ITEM #7-January 11, 2022
Date: Friday, January 7, 2022 10:39:21 PM

Dear Los Altos City Council,

I am in middle school and I have lived in Los Altos since I was 2 years old. I love living in our town. I participate in the window painting during Halloween, I go to the Pet Parade with my family every year, I enjoy the Festival of Lights Parade, and I love going to the Farmers Market in the summer. While these events are amazing, nothing compares to the time I spend at the off leash dog park at Hillview with my family's dogs. Smarty Jones and Benji are Havanese puppies. They are great dogs and they have made so many friends at the dog park. My sisters and I have also made a lot of friends with the neighborhood kids who bring their dogs there. We love walking to the dog park after dinner on most evenings. Please keep the off-leash Hillview dog park open. It is so much fun and it is so important to me and my neighborhood friends.

Thank you for listening!

Your Neighbor,
Zainab S.
Resident of Los Altos

From: [Zeenat Khan](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Cc: [Hillview Dog Park Preservation Society](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT- AGENDA ITEM #7 - January 11, 2022
Date: Friday, January 7, 2022 11:45:14 PM

Dear Honorable Mayor and City Council:

We strongly support the off-leash program at Hillview. Our town needs a dedicated off-leash space in which our dogs are free to run, play and socialize with each other. Please help us make off-leash at Hillview a permanent reality for our pets.

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
Maryam S. and Zeen K.
Residents of Los Altos

From: [Miriam Umeoka](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: fenced in dog park at HOP
Date: Saturday, January 8, 2022 12:38:28 PM

As a resident just across HOP I'm against the fenced-in dog park; the main reason being the lack of parking space in the area. We already have too much traffic and people parking everywhere (even in prohibited areas) when there are soccer classes during the week and even worse during the weekends with the weekend crowd. HOP is a small park, with few trash bins (which by the way overflows during its busiest times) and one restroom.

Hope you put this into consideration.

Thank you.

Miriam Umeoka

From: [Haritha Nandela](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Cc: [Uma Subramanian](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT –AGENDA ITEM # 7 - January 11, 2022
Date: Saturday, January 8, 2022 1:57:55 PM

Hello Committee members,

We are long due an enclosed dog park in Los Altos. I support the initiative to build a dog park at Hillview and Mckenzie park. Please approve this proposal.

Thanks

Haritha and Biscuit Nandela

From: [Garrick Toubassi](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: In support of the Hillview dog park
Date: Saturday, January 8, 2022 2:13:25 PM

To the Honorable Mayor Anita Enander, and other members of the Los Altos City Council,

Although I will be unable to attend the meeting on 1/11/22, I would like to add my voice of support for the Hillview dog park. As a resident of Los Altos for 22 years, and a resident at our home on East Edith for 12 years, our family has enjoyed the ability for dog's (and human's!) to socialize on a regular basis. The environment amongst the participants and dogs is incredibly friendly, welcoming, inclusive, and wholesome. You should join us one day to see for yourself! Owners are very responsible about picking up waste, and humans and dogs of all ages enjoy the environment.

Given the large (and given the Pandemic, growing!) number of dog owners, it seems a very reasonable use of this public space to carve out the small amount of time per day for dogs and dog owners to congregate.

On behalf of myself and my family, please make the Hillview dog park a permanent fixture. Thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely,

Garrick Toubassi

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Dog Park - Agenda Item #7
Date: Saturday, January 8, 2022 6:13:23 PM

Los Altos City Council Members:

I object to the recommendation made in the agenda report summary prepared for the Jan 11 city council meeting, to consider Heritage Oaks as a possible third dog park location.

Heritage Oaks is not suitable for a dog park because of its proximity to the residences on McKenzie Ave and the lack of parking. The impact on the residence is acknowledged in the agenda report summary but the report fails to acknowledge the severity of this problem. Contrary to the report, parking is very limited. Moreover, unlike some of the other parks in Los Altos, there is no nearby parking lot. Access to the few available parking spaces is only possible through McKenzie Ave. This is likely to result in traffic jam in McKenzie Ave and risk collisions with residents' cars pulling out of their garages. This problem is already seen today even without the establishment of a dog park but a dog park will make this much worse.

Other parks in South Los Altos are better suited than Heritage Oaks for a dog park in terms of the impact on the residents and the parking but I believe a much better solution is the big parks in Mountain View, e.g., Questa. This is a very big park, no nearby residences, and large parking lot. The dog Off-Leash area is a small portion of the park. No interference with other activities in this park. Questa has a lot of capacity and can easily serve the south Los Altos residents for dog Off-Leash today. The city of Los Altos could formally discuss this with Mountain View.

Menashe Shahar
1335 McKenzie Ave

[REDACTED]

From: [JLK](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Cc: [City Council](#)
Subject: Public comment agenda item #7 - January 11, 2022
Date: Saturday, January 8, 2022 7:57:45 PM
Attachments: [cc0672a1-26af-4e82-8621-f1372cd1c8fa.tiff](#)
[e376f2d1-37e2-4584-8bd5-2cf2a325bf31.tiff](#)

Dear City Council,

I am very concerned that a proposal for two fenced-in dog parks is being considered by the City Council on January 11th. One of the locations identified by the City staff is McKenzie Park despite the numerous concerns raised by the Dog Park Subcommittee in their May 20, 2020 report. These include damage to heritage trees, drainage issues, expense, and danger to dogs from caterpillars. Additionally, the citizens of Los Altos were also clear that McKenzie Park should not be altered and destroyed for the sake of a dog park. It is disappointing that the City is pushing forward with this location despite its own clear evidence that this is not desired by the community and not safe for dogs.

Lincoln Park is listed as “not feasible” in the current Jan 11th proposal since it was deemed unwise to impact green space. Based on this criteria, McKenzie Park should also not be an option. McKenzie Park is a gem of a park with grassy areas, trees, and natural landscape that is enjoyed daily by the local community.

If the City insists on creating a fenced-in dog park, it should start with one low-cost location without dangers to dogs and humans to determine success and feasibility. Based on the City's negative evaluation of the off-leash program, I suspect the idea will be abandoned. Owning a dog does not mean we are in favor of destroying parkland for a dog park. We have so little green space in Los Altos and should prioritize its protection. Please put the money and energy into projects that benefit our entire community.

Sincerely,

Ed Kim

South Los Altos resident

Excerpt from Dog Park Subcommittee May 20, 2020 report

McKenzie Park Location Discussion:

Initially, staff recommended that McKenzie Park be considered for a fenced-in dog park. The Subcommittee noted that there were some problems in

recommending that site:

For example, substantial capital investment would be necessary to make McKenzie Park functional as a fenced-in dog park. Hardscape would need to be removed, some trees would need to be removed, drainage would need to be improved and fencing would need to be extensive to enclose the irregular area of this park.

In addition, there was concern for the impact to trees from dog urine and resulting necessary watering. Also, protective fencing would be required for a number of the trees. Parking is also an issue due to the site being frequently full of vehicles during the day. Caterpillars, potentially harmful to dogs, are abundant in the months of April and May in this park. Although all parks in Los Altos face this potential infestation issue, it is a particular issue for the McKenzie Park site because the proposed fenced-in dog park would be located directly under the trees that are most infested with the caterpillars. Furthermore, a fenced-in dog park at this location would remove resident access to a play structure as well as public benches and picnic tables. Finally, and importantly, the data from the workshops do not support having a fenced-in dog park at this site.

Therefore, given these considerations and the negative impacts that would result from making a portion of the park a fenced-in dog park site, the Subcommittee does not recommend a fence-in dog park at this location. Furthermore, the recent financial constraints on the City budget, as a direct result of the Corona virus, also gives reason to reject a fenced-in dog park at McKenzie Park.

Views of McKenzie Park front of park open space:

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Comments to City Council's agenda 1/11/2022 Item #7
Date: Saturday, January 8, 2022 10:38:13 PM

Dear City Council members,
This is a comment to the Staff report in regards to establishment of Permanent dog parks.

It looks really strange that after the failure of the Pilot Program in the Baseball Field the staff recommended establishing at least 2 dog parks in Los Altos.
This basically sounds like: "We tried it. It failed. Let's do it anyway but on a larger scale and at an additional cost of \$100,000 per year to the community".

This makes no sense whatsoever.

If the City of Los Altos really wants to please the fraction of the owners of ~4000 dog (who actually want to use off-leash park) the best way would be to offer a part of this \$100,000 to the City of Mountain View to share maintenance costs of the Cuesta Park in exchange for a "license to use the off-leash dog area by Los Altos residents" (which they can do now anyway) because:

1. The dog owners will have much much larger and much better place to run the dogs off-leash
2. The neighbors of the proposed fenced dog parks in Los Altos will not have the "noise pollution" produced by barking dogs, increased traffic, and devaluation of their properties because of these nuisances.
3. The City will avoid reduction of the tax revenue due to devaluation of the properties neighboring the dog parks.
4. The City will also avoid a likely costly litigation brought by the owners of the properties neighboring the dog parks.
5. The current aesthetics of the parks will not be compromised by the ugly fencing around the off-leash areas
6. The City will be able to also use the leftover amounts between the declared \$100,000 of cost and the actual cost of the "license to use" the Cuesta Park to improve the existing parks so there will be even more activities (including the potentially revenue-producing ones) there.
7. All Los Altos residents will avoid polarization of the community because everybody will get what they want: dog owners will have legitimate ability to use a very good dog park and the neighbors of the proposed sites will be able to continue the "quiet enjoyment" of their properties without disturbance of the excessive barking noises.

I hope that you will discuss this option and do what is right for the residents of Los Altos!

Best Regards.
Vladimir Rubashevsky
1301 McKenzie Ave.
[REDACTED]

From: [M.Squire](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Public Comment Item #7 Jan.11 2022
Date: Sunday, January 9, 2022 12:49:19 PM

Dear City Council Members,

In looking at the current Staff report, we understand that the first two choices for fenced-in dog parks are the Civic Center Soccer Field East and McKenzie Park West.

We are writing because Heritage Oaks Park is listed as an alternative to McKenzie Park West. We are concerned that if McKenzie Park West is eliminated for some reason by the City Council, then Heritage Oaks would be voted on.

Therefore we would like to voice our opinion that Heritage Oaks Park is not best suited for a fenced-in dog park.

We would like to address only two of the criteria the Staff used in choosing park locations, sufficient parking and a buffer from residences. Both are insufficient.

First, would be parking. The current parking that exists in front of the underdeveloped area of Heritage Oaks Park is also undeveloped. It is just mud and big puddles now during the rainy season. There is no pavement or parking stripes. This park is very well used and that parking area always gets filled up with cars from park users. If a dog park is added, where many dog owners will be driving to the park to exercise their dogs, there definitely will not be enough parking. As it is, people illegally double park on the one side of the park.

However, the most important issue is the lack of buffer between the park and residences.

The park is only 50 feet across the street from peoples' homes. This is not sufficient.

We would like the City Council members to imagine being in their homes and having to listen to barking dogs starting at dawn and continuing intermittently all day. We live directly across the street and we hear unleashed dogs barking during the early hours of the morning regularly, and that is from only 2 -3 dogs gathering. The noise level from barking dogs was one of the negatives reported from the Hillview Off-Leash Pilot Program this past Fall and I fear that noise would be a big uncontrollable issue. There is no mention of how rules will be enforced and who will enforce them. McKenzie Park West at least is considered to have no residential impact according to the Staff report.

We would like the City Council to seriously consider the neighbors of Heritage Oaks Park before voting in favor of putting a fenced-in dog park at Heritage Oaks.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Millie and John Squire

From: [Chaya Shaha](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Fenced Dog Park - Agenda items #7 1/11/22
Date: Sunday, January 9, 2022 1:42:34 PM

Dear City Council Members,

I am opposed to the Fenced dog park at Heritage Oak park (as it listed as an alternative to McKenzie Park West)!

Heritage oak park is not suitable to serve as a location for a dog park in all aspects!

Residential houses are in very close proximity to the park. There is not a sufficient buffer zone between the park and my home. It is just a few seconds from my front door!!!! Any dog can jump in front of cars or run to my home and bite my grandchildren or me. The noise level of barking dogs that close to residential houses would be unbearable.

Additionally, there is minimal parking with no parking lot like in all the others parks! The parking is on the street and in front of my home. Currently, without a dog park, there is often insufficient parking for residents as well as park goers. There is often traffic on the street which can be very dangerous for residents backing from their garage and children who are playing. The presence of a dog park will make this problem significantly worse, it will increase traffic and can endanger children as well as residents.

As citizen of Los Altos I have the right to live in peace and without noise or fear of dog attack as I or my grandkids steps out the door or I may accidentally drive over a running dog or made an accident because of too much traffic as I get out of my garage.

We are too close to the park !!!

Best regards,

Chaya Shaha
1335 McKenzie Ave.
Los Altos

From: [Smadar Agmon](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: January 11 meeting Agenda item #7 the establishment of permanent dog parks
Date: Sunday, January 9, 2022 2:40:11 PM

Dear city council members,

I am a long time Los Altos resident at McKenzie Ave. and I am opposing the establishment of a fenced dog park at Heritage Oaks park as it will affect residents and park users negatively.

1. My main concern is the noise from a dog park which does not fit so close to residents in an otherwise very quiet neighborhood. Both the residents on McKenzie ave and the park users will lose the otherwise tranquil environment. Being so close to residences and to a well used park, I think the location is not appropriate for a dog park.
2. Another very important concern is the parking, or the lack of appropriate parking. Parking is already an issue on McKenzie Ave. With multiple households having more than two drivers, some of their cars have to park on the street. With more ADUs being built soon there will be even more residents' cars on the street. The postman leaves us warning notes if we park our cars in front of the mailboxes and sometimes does not deliver our mail on that day which leaves less places to park on our side of the street. Park visitors usually park their cars on the park side of the street but on most weekends and some afternoons there aren't enough spaces there or they are puddles of water after a rainy day, and they park on the houses side as well which leaves us no room for our cars. The undeveloped area has parking that is undeveloped as well and gets very muddy in the winter.
3. The park is heavily used which is great but many times large groups gather there for events such as birthdays. In those cases which are not rare, especially in the summer, the visitors end up parking far from the park, snaking along McKenzie ave. since there is no parking allowed on Portland or Miramonte streets. Adding more cars will affect the park users' experience by having to park even farther from the park.
4. My other concern is If some dog owners trust their dogs to behave or just for convenience, decide not to leash their dogs between the car and the gate of the fenced park, I can see a potential danger to kids who play there and people who are scared of dogs. This place is well trafficked at all hours of the day. It is not mentioned who will supervise users behavior and what will be the punishment.
5. It seems from a map that the undeveloped side of the park is unused which is not the case. There is a lot of charm to the natural setting and many people choose to walk, jog, bike, or walk their dog there.
6. The location of the dog park is another concern. It will have to be very close to the creek. I don't think it is healthy to have so much dog urine close to a watershed. The way the rectangular area of the park was drawn on the map is impossible to build as part of it seems to be in the creek. People like to walk, jog, bike, or walk their dogs close to the creek for the natural setting and it will be nice to leave the dirt path there for them to enjoy which will make the park even closer to the nearby houses.
7. The look is another concern. For years we were able to maintain a more natural appeal to

the city and a large fenced area does not qualify for the look we are trying to achieve.

I think McKenzie park West by Fremont Ave is a reasonable place for a fenced dog park for South Los Altos. No residents will be affected, it is located on a main traffic route, Fremont ave., with good access and good parking. It is not adjacent to a park where many people try to spend time peacefully, and it is already noisy there as it faces Foothill Expressway so dog barks won't disturb an otherwise quiet place. We should not forget that Cuesta park is very close, big, and very suited to off leash dogs.

Regards,
Smadar Agmon

From: [Cheryl Kershner](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: January 11, 2022: ITEM 7- DOG PARK
Date: Sunday, January 9, 2022 6:34:36 PM

Dear Mayor, Councilmembers, City Manager, City Attorney and City Clerk,

We, life-long guardians of dogs, remain vehemently opposed to the latest attempt to diminish parkland in our beloved city, particularly McKenzie Park.

The arguments against this latest attempt of the City to reduce the scant open space remaining to its residents are countless. Albeit included are: destruction of heritage trees; increased traffic, parking and noise in an already crowded corridor; undue hardship on abutting neighborhoods; liability exposure; and cost of maintenance, including use of oft-rationed water. Too, with the world's present condition painfully demonstrating the need for more open space, more time outdoors and less crowded gatherings, we are appalled that money, time and focus is being spent on decreasing our precious open space.

Respectfully submitted by:
Cheryl Kershner and David Kays
919 Clinton Rd, Los Altos 94024

From: [Rani Roley](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Cc: [Rani Roley](#)
Subject: Dog Park - Agenda Item #7
Date: Sunday, January 9, 2022 8:25:39 PM

Hello,

I do not support the recommendation made in the agenda report to consider Heritage Oaks as a possible 3rd dog park location.

I am a dog owner and we live right across the park. We constantly see traffic issues with cars blocking our driveway especially during the summer months and also when there is any game at the park. There are very limited parking spots and I can't imagine the issues with increased traffic. It's already a nightmare navigating the street trying to get to our home when there are so many people at the park.

Along with the increased traffic, there will be a lot of noise from the dogs barking etc. ruining any tranquility.

The fenced in area will be too close to our homes - there is only a small road (McKenzie Ave) between the park and our houses. Heritage Oaks Park is a tiny park compared to the others.

Thank you,
Rani Roley

From: [Betty Christopher](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: January 11 Agenda Item #7
Date: Sunday, January 9, 2022 9:32:25 PM

Re: Fenced-in Dog Park

Dear City Council Members,

I agree with the staff recommendation that McKenzie Park West is a better location for a fenced-in dog park than Heritage Oaks Park. Heritage Oaks Park is right across the street from many homes. The noise from dogs barking is annoying, especially early morning and early evening.

Please do not plan a fenced-in dog park at Heritage Oaks Park.

Thank you for considering my feelings.

Thanks for your service to the city,
Betty Christopher
1300 Holly Ave.

From: [Yoav Agmon](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Oposition to having Herritage Oak Park as a location for a Dog-park (agenda Item # 7)
Date: Sunday, January 9, 2022 11:57:51 PM

City Council Members:

This letter presents my strong objection to the consideration of creating a dog park at the Heritage Oak location.

We have lived across from the park for over 35 years, our children were born and raised here. The south part of the park and its access to the Permanente Creek serves as a small monument to the (historical) rural nature of Los Altos and is constantly enjoyed by many of the active residents (including dog owners), a glimpse of how it used to be before all these urban developments. Any proposed change to this area risks forever destroying a nice reminder of Los Altos history.

Now for less emotional and nostalgic reasons:

It is obvious that establishing such a fenced dog park with all its intended activities, right in a very close proximity to our homes will cause us unacceptable harm on multiple fronts and occasions.

The relevant report indicates other possible locations where the issue of negative impact to residential homes don't exist.

Thus, If the Heritage Oak location will be selected despite all the opposition of the neighborhood, it will appear as Los Altos City council intentionally decided that hurting us is OK.

I hope that our elected representatives will decide in favor of selecting a location that does not impact its local residents, and we are not forced to continue our fight against a Dog-Park right next to our homes.

Thank you for your consideration,

Yoav Agmon
1359 McKenzie ave Los Altos

From: [Henry More-New](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT AGENDA ITEM 7 - 01/11/2022.
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 2:32:06 AM

AGAINST Establishment of Permanent Dog Parks

Dear Mayor and Members of the City Council,

My wife and I live in South Los Altos and we walk our dog almost daily through McKenzie Park, enjoying the green grass and the exceptional heritage live oaks and redwoods, particularly the spectacular old live oak next to Fremont which must be centuries older than the City of Los Altos itself. We do NOT take our dog to any dog parks for reasons of general canine safety. Exercise for dogs is far better controlled in one's own backyard, and where safety is really not an issue provided one's fences are maintained.

Why would the City Council vote to sequester a significant portion of McKenzie Park for the enjoyment of only about 250 dog-park-using residents (the City's PARC's estimate) from a total city population of almost 40,000? For the benefit of less than 1% of the residents?

Why would the City Council risk the lives of our heritage trees from overwatering under their canopies?

Why would the City Council vote to turn a quiet and tranquil space for contemplation and enjoyment into a smelly and ugly eyesore?

Why would the City Council vote to put any dog parks in areas of predominantly single-family homes with their own yards?

If the City Council is determined to build a dog park, should it not be located nearer to those parts of the City of Los Altos that contain a larger number of residents who lack gardens and yards? Perhaps near El Camino Real and Downtown Los Altos?

Why wouldn't the City Council vote to put one large central dog park conveniently downtown with excellent access to water and parking, and far from residential houses? Why would this not be in the unused space East of the City Council offices, North of the Library, West of the LACY building and South of the City Council parking lot? The City Council would then have the benefit of constant feedback on the rightness of their decision and on the success of their judgemental skills – all this without destroying the quality of life of a large number of residents of Los Altos.

Yours sincerely,

Henry & Adelle

Henry and Adelle More
1436 Miramonte Avenue
Los Altos, CA 94024-5601

From: [Tomer Agmon](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Objection to Dog Park at Heritage Oaks Park
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 9:54:16 AM

This email is in regards to the Dog Park proposal within Heritage Oaks Park.

As a long time resident, born and raised in this house right across the street from Heritage Oaks Park, I have seen this park at all its uses. From children walking and biking through it in the morning to get to school, and back in the afternoon, to families hosting weekend park cookouts, elementary school soccer teams training on the grass, young mothers and fathers pushing strollers, toddlers learning to ride their first tricycles, to yes indeed, people walking and playing with their dogs. First and foremost is the familial aspect. This park has long been a safe haven for all the families in this and the surrounding neighborhoods. It has been a go-through detour for anyone in the area taking a walk and a comforting place of rest for anyone driving by who had had a long stressful day and simply needed to park and nap a little (Including the local postmen, delivery drivers, and utility workers who need a short break before returning to the grind of the day). Not to mention the many household cats who enjoy exploring the region (I personally have two).

A designated dog park would be detrimental to the area. No longer would the park be a safe haven for children, families, walkers, and hard working essential workers, but instead it would become a single purpose use area. When families come by with their dogs, under control and in limited numbers, this park remains relatively safe for all involved. With a dog-park designation, this would no longer be the case. There could be no stray kids, no wandering cats, no young families with babies in strollers. I love dogs, we all do, but there is no disputing the fact that if left unchecked, there are some wild ones at heart. This is not their fault, they never asked to be domesticated for their hunting ability and later criticized for this very same aspect. But it is undeniable, dogs can be dangerous. I have already had one cat mauled to death within the outskirts of that very park, and would like to prevent all possibilities of this happening again. And in an area such as this, so very dependent on the safety of small children and a haven for the families in the multiple nearby neighborhoods, a dog park would be unacceptable. Simply put, it is a bad idea at this particular location.

Thank You for your consideration,
-Tomer Agmon

From: [Medini Gore](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Objection to dog park at Heritage Oaks
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 10:16:36 AM

City Council Members:

This letter represents my strong objection to the consideration of creating a dog park at the Heritage Oaks location.

We have lived in the neighborhood close to Heritage Oaks Park for over 26 years and have enjoyed the open space and rural feel. Making a dog park at the Heritage Oaks park will become a nuisance to everyone in the neighborhood with increased traffic and noise. Several homes directly face the park and will be heavily impacted. To consider this location for a dog park especially when other locations in the city can potentially be used is disregarding the harm and inconvenience to the neighborhood. I sincerely hope the city council members will take this into consideration while making the final decision.

Sincerely,
Medini Gore
1415 Oakhurst Avenue

From: [Lara McGurk](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT-AGENDA ITEM # 7 - January 11, 2022"
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 10:24:13 AM

Honorable City Council:

I strongly support the off-leash program at Hillview. This program is important to me because I'm a local resident, live near Hillview and would like a place to take my dog that is walking distance. As a los altos tax payer I feel we should have atleast one, fenced in dog park for residents.

Sincerely,

Lara

Resident of Los Altos!

Lara McGurk


From: [Martin Saso](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Cc: Heritage-oaks-dog-park@googlegroups.com; [Martin Saso](#)
Subject: Public Comment Item #7 Jan. 11, 2022
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 10:34:50 AM

To the City Council Members,

With regards to and based on the data within the current Staff Report regarding the first two choices for fenced-in dog parks, I have the following comments for you to please consider and, respectfully, act on...

- First, I read that the first two choices for fenced-in dog parks are the Civic Center Soccer Field East and McKenzie Park West.
- Second, Heritage Oaks Park is listed as an alternative to McKenzie Park West.

Given the above, based on the following data, Heritage Oaks Park would continue be an inappropriate alternative and a "Safety Issue" for those that live nearby on McKenzie Ave and the surrounding areas for the following reasons:

- There is inadequate parking for the "increase" in the volume of cars that these "dog owners" would bring to McKenzie Ave.
 - It is logical that they would then "park" their cars in front of the homes and, as we have all witnessed in the past, have their unleashed dogs run freely with the threat of having them run into the home owner's yards (Safety Issue). Recall previous such events were reported last year.
- Respectfully, the Heritage Oaks Park area you are considering as a back-up to McKenzie Park West is only some 50 feet from the homes on McKenzie Ave, this is clearly inadequate and another "Safety Issue".
- There is no mention of how any violations or correction actions will be enforced and by whom. I read in the recent Staff report that McKenzie Park West has no residential impact which again, based on the known data, is not the case for Heritage Oaks Park given the form factor of the Park, the proximity to the residents and their homes and the limited parking area.
 - Clearly there will be "Residential Impact" and numerous "SAFETY issues" with Heritage Oaks Park.

Based on the data within your report, indeed any efforts to have Heritage Oaks Park be an alternative to McKenzie Park West would be an inappropriate choice and a disaster as the aforementioned "SAFETY" concerns would indeed occur.

Respectfully, in our world of Silicon Valley, "bad designs" are not successful and are "stopped" before going forward into production.

- Based on the data you and others have shared, Heritage Oaks Park is not the answer nor a "back-up solution" for your fenced-in dog park idea.

We respectfully ask that the City Council do not vote in favor of putting a fenced-in dog park at Heritage Oaks Park.

Thank you,
Martin Saso
Home Owner
McKenzie Ave.
Los Altos, Ca

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Public Comment](#)
Cc: heritage-oaks-dog-park@googlegroups.com; [REDACTED]
Subject: Public Comment Item #7 Jan. 11, 2022
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 10:42:19 AM

To the City Council Members,

With regards to and based on the data within the current Staff Report regarding the first two choices for fenced-in dog parks, I have the following comments for you to please consider and, respectfully, act on...

- First, I read that the first two choices for fenced-in dog parks are the Civic Center Soccer Field East and McKenzie Park West.
- Second, Heritage Oaks Park is listed as an alternative to McKenzie Park West.

Given the above, based on the following data, Heritage Oaks Park would continue be an inappropriate alternative and a "Safety Issue" for those that live nearby on McKenzie Ave and the surrounding areas for the following reasons:

- There is inadequate parking for the "increase" in the volume of cars that these "dog owners" would bring to McKenzie Ave.
 - It is logical that they would then "park" their cars in front of the homes and, as we have all witnessed in the past, have their unleashed dogs run freely with the threat of having them run into the home owner's yards (Safety Issue). Recall previous such events were reported last year.
- Respectfully, the Heritage Oaks Park area you are considering as a back-up to McKenzie Park West is only some 50 feet from the homes on McKenzie Ave, this is clearly inadequate and another "Safety Issue".
- There is no mention of how any violations or correction actions will be enforced and by whom. I read in the recent Staff report that McKenzie Park West has no residential impact which again, based on the known data, is not the case for Heritage Oaks Park given the form factor of the Park, the proximity to the residents and their homes and the limited parking area.
 - Clearly there will be "Residential Impact" and numerous "SAFETY issues" with Heritage Oaks Park.

Based on the data within your report, indeed any efforts to have Heritage Oaks Park be an alternative to McKenzie Park West would be an inappropriate choice and a disaster as the aforementioned "SAFETY" concerns would indeed occur.

Respectfully, in our world of Silicon Valley, "bad designs" are not successful and are "stopped" before going forward into production.

- Based on the data you and others have shared, Heritage Oaks Park is not the answer nor a "back-up solution" for your fenced-in dog park idea.

We respectfully ask that the City Council do not vote in favor of putting a fenced-in

dog park at Heritage Oaks Park.

Thank you,
Martin Saso
Home Owner
McKenzie Ave.
Los Altos, Ca

From: [Noa Grant](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Off-Leash Dog Park on City Council Agenda for Jan 11 2022
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 11:18:51 AM

Dear council member,

We read the thoughtful staff report that analyzes the different potential locations for an off leash dog park, and to the most part we agree with the recommendations. With one exception. The report sees minimal residential impact for such park at heritage oaks park, whereas we see this as a direct and significant impact on our neighborhood.

We have been living in Los Altos for the past twenty some years. We cherish our town, and appreciate the safety, friendliness, and sense of community, among many other qualities that our town offers.

We would like to first voice our safety concerns. We have three young children in our household, twin 7 years old boys and a 9 years old girl, who love biking to the park, playing on the playground, and having picnics on the grass. We are obviously concerned for their safety with this proposal.

For many years we had been playing soccer at Heritage Oaks Park, both recreationally with friends and family and taking part in Coach Ken's classes. We would like to continue using the park recreationally, and are concerned that an off leash park would introduce unscooped poop, spoiling the experience for all park goers and making the park unsuitable for our family's activities. And though we LOVE dogs and have had dogs over the years, we don't want unleashed dogs chasing us or our soccer balls.

We love the natural setting that this park uniquely offers, bordering with Permanente Creek. We are concerned that off leash dogs would chase away wildlife that habitats in this magnificent surrounding. It would be so much better for this little piece of nature if you found a more suitable fenced off area to house the off leash initiative.

We are also concerned with the obvious nuisances, traffic, noise, and parking. Heritage oaks is a very small neighborhood park that is adjacent to residences and simply doesn't have the capacity to take on more activities.

Accordingly, we believe that the nearby McKenzie park is a far more suitable location for a fenced off dog park that would not be negatively affecting an entire park and residential neighborhood.

We urge you to take us impacted residents into account as you're considering the designated locations for an off-leash dog park. Let's prioritize the people of our town, safety, and our property value.

Thank you for your consideration.

Noa Grant and Guy Gecht
1380 McKenzie Avenue
Los Altos

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All the best,
Noa Grant



From: [Gillie Roth](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Re: Establishment of permanent dog parks
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 11:20:09 AM

Dear City Council,

As a resident on McKenzie Avenue, I have several concerns that come to mind regarding the suggestion of developing a fenced dog park at Heritage Oaks Park. I believe that McKenzie Park West is a great candidate for this dog park, as is currently proposed.

On McKenzie Avenue and Heritage Oaks park we already see a parking shortage on days that the park is used for parties and sports activities, so there is not sufficient parking for an additional use of the park on the most popular days (weekends and holidays).

As I'm sure many people can relate to during the Pandemic, we spend a lot of time in our house and backyard now that we work from home. Specifically, our office windows face the park and we are concerned that the noise of the dogs playing as well as their owners raising their voices to get their dogs to listen will alter our quality of life. We chose to live here with the understanding that we live near a quiet neighborhood park and replacing this with a loud dog recreation area would completely change our living environment.

I believe that McKenzie Park is a much better option with it's parking availability as well as having no residential houses near the proposed location. This location already has the noise of foothill expressway nearby, and the additional dog park seems like it would be less of a change in that environment.

Thanks,
Gillie Roth

January 10, 2022

Dear City Councilmembers,

I am writing with regard to the Dog Park proposal that is Agenda Item #7 for the 1/11/22 meeting.

I am very glad that, based on the pilot project at Hillview, both Council and staff concluded that FENCED-IN dog parks will work better for everyone than unfenced off-leash hours. I support the staff recommendation for fenced-in dog parks, because such facilities will ensure greater safety and less disturbance to other park users, cyclists, pedestrians, and neighbors.

I also support the staff recommendation regarding placement of the dog park in south Los Altos at McKenzie Park West, because that location will have the least negative impact on nearby residents. Although it may not be ideal, because it removes green space, it is the “least bad” location, as staff concluded.

The staff report suggests that Heritage Oaks Park would be an acceptable alternate location for the dog park, but there are two reasons why I don't think even the undeveloped section of Heritage Oaks Park would be an acceptable location.

Noise: The Hillview pilot program demonstrated clearly that when many dogs are gathered in one location, there is a lot of barking and people shouting to each other and their dogs, which disturbs nearby residents. The location proposed by staff for the dog park in the undeveloped area of Heritage Oaks Park is certainly preferable to using the grassy area that is highly utilized as a sports field and by other park users. But, it is extremely close to residences, and therefore would create constant disturbance for them.

Parking: There is NOT sufficient parking at Heritage Oaks for an additional use. A fenced-in dog park would generate significant traffic and need for parking by those who would drive their dogs to the dog park. Heritage Oaks is a very heavily used park, and there are times when nearly every parking space adjacent to it (both paved and the dirt spaces closer to where the dog park would be located) are already filled. Also, all available spaces in front of residences on McKenzie Avenue are also used at certain times, including cars parked in our driveways, in front of our mailboxes, and right next to the park.

I have done head counts at Heritage Oaks Park, McKenzie Park, and Marymeade Park on several occasions. It is common for there to be 30-40 people at Heritage Oaks in the afternoons and on weekends, due to the soccer programs, volleyball games, playgrounds, and well-used picnic areas. Not counting the tennis courts, there are often only 4-10 people at McKenzie Park and at Marymeade Park at the same times that Heritage Oaks is already very heavily utilized.

In short, I support the staff recommendation and urge you to vote accordingly.

Thank you,
Jane Clayton

Public Comment Agenda Item #7 - January 11, 2022

Dear City Council Members and Staff,

I am sad that the vast majority of dog owners now waiting over a decade for off-leash hours at our neighborhood parks may perceive they have been stabbed in the back by this city council.

Creating one or two dedicated fenced dog parks is a band aid that may satisfy the needs of a small number of dog owners at the expense of the many that will rarely if ever use them.

And, either the Staff or Council have somehow ignored the recent two years of PARC community input which showed that the vast majority of dog owners want off-leash hours and not a dedicated dog park.

Dedicated fenced dog parks may make a much smaller number of dog owners happy but does nothing for the vast majority of us because these tiny places are too small for exercise and are a breeding ground for dog diseases. Moreover, dedicated fenced dog parks take away open shared spaces best left alone.

Ironically, PARC members including then Commissioner Weinberg voted unanimously against dedicated fenced dog parks – especially at McKenzie. And, neither location serves anyone that lives in South Los Altos.

Neither of the two locations meets best practices for either design or size. Indeed, the minimum size for small dogs is ½ acre and for large dogs 1 acre – ideally 2 acres if possible. And, dog parks will not stop dogs from barking or dog incidents or digging holes [unless artificial grass or something similar]. Indeed, having all day use of a fenced in dog park may cause as many or more complaints than having limited off-leash hours.

A better solution that also provides ample space for dog owners and their pets is to share our tiny neighborhood park lands by adopting limited off-leash hours instead. All that is needed to resolve many of the concerns is to provide fencing like at Lincoln Park around park perimeters and playgrounds where they exist.

Some say it is hopeless for this council to ever listen to residents but nevertheless I ask you to abort the creation of dedicated fenced dog parks and adopt off-leash hours instead. If we finally get off-leash hours I may no longer have to travel to another town to socialize with friends and play with my dog.

Frank Martin

From: [Haluk Ozdemir](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Please: No Wuff Wuff at Heritage Oaks Park
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 1:41:40 PM

I am disillusioned with the repeat request, albeit slightly modified, for a dog park in the Heritage Oaks Park; this park is used by very young residents of our peaceful city as well as adults and it should remain so – we do not want this park to go to the dogs, as it were. I urge all city council members to vote NO so that this proposal does not comeback clouded in a creative camouflage , and allow the city save the associated costs of staff and the \$100,000 earmarked for this effort. As far as I know, Mountain View allows Los Altos dog owners to use the Cuesta Park’s dedicated dog path for this purpose (as well as others). Let’s keep Los Altos parks for the people.

Regards,

Haluk Ozdemir
1311 McKenzie Avenue, just across Heritage Oaks Park

From: Linda White <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 10, 2022 11:09 AM
To: Casey Richardson <crichardson@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment Agenda Item #7 January 11, 2022

Dear Los Altos City Council Members,

I am writing to oppose replacing a section of McKenzie Park (by the tennis courts) with a fenced-in dog park.

In 2020 I submitted a petition to the City of Los Altos Parks and Recreation Committee when I was speaking at a public meeting regarding the fenced-in dog park agenda topic. That petition had close to sixty signatures opposing a fenced-in dog park at the McKenzie Park location. I collected those signatures by going door to door and discussing the pros and cons of replacing this open park with a fenced-in dog park. I focused my efforts in the neighborhoods close to the proposed dog park site at McKenzie Park. The signatures were gathered on Golden Way, Clinton Rd., Mora Drive, Altos Oaks, Springer Rd, and Fremont Ave. Close to half of the signatures that I collected were from dog owners who valued McKenzie Park as it is and expressed frustration with Los Altos officials trying to take away what little park space we have.

I would hope that this information has been shared with the current council members.

McKenzie Park is a valuable asset that the City of Los Altos should be proud and grateful to have. Beyond its monetary value it is a valuable community asset that provides a quiet respite for residents of all ages and abilities. It is a restorative spot where people who work in our community can eat lunch and rest before returning to serving our neighborhoods, it is a rest stop for seniors who live in the surrounding neighborhoods out for a walk, bicyclists gather here before and after their rides to socialize, families can play tennis while their children play, do homework, or have lunch, the list can go on and on. McKenzie Park is home to a small forest of beautiful redwood trees, a heritage oak tree, public art, low grassy knolls, picnic tables and park benches. This small piece of land provides natural resources that attract a variety of birds, insects, and wildlife that in turn provide a natural landscape that is enjoyed and treasured by all who discover this amazingly beautiful park. What more can you ask for from a public park??

All of these features are available and open to everyone, even dog owners. Currently, people of all ages, all abilities, all backgrounds, and financial status can use this park. Why would the City of Los Altos want to fence off this beautiful open

space, endanger the health (and possible destroy) the natural environment, shut out a large portion of residents and visitors in exchange for a dog park that only serves a limited number of residents that want a place for their dogs to run. I like dogs, and I am a former dog owner but this plan for a fenced-in dog park at this location makes no sense when you compare these two options. From a monetary perspective the city would be taking a beautiful piece of valuable land with incredible assets and turn it into a patch of land where dogs can pee and poo. Does this make any sense at all??

Our Los Altos community leaders should be protecting our limited open spaces and parks. It would be a wise investment for our city and for future generations.

Sincerely, Linda White
928 Clinton Rd.
Los Altos, Ca.
94024

From: [Bill Sheppard](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT AGENDA ITEM 7 - Jan 11, 2022
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 3:04:32 PM

Dear City Council,

I am emailing to express my strong support for an enclosed dog park at McKenzie as recommended in the staff report. This proposal would make use of an area which is now largely unused, and it's far enough from any homes that noise is unlikely to be an issue. There are many, many dogs (and dog owners!) in our neighborhood. The pilot program at Hillview clearly demonstrated the demand within Los Altos for dog parks. The proposed dog park at the Community Center can be easily justified, but isn't sufficient to serve residents of south Los Altos. The proposal for a dog park at McKenzie would greatly benefit our community with little downside.

Please vote to approve this proposal.

Bill Sheppard
1457 Miramonte Ave
Los Altos

From: [Barbara Adey](#)
To: [City Council](#); [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Fenced-In Dog Park Objection
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 4:38:16 PM
Attachments: [item_3c - dog_park_subcommittee_recommendations.pdf](#)

To the Los Altos City Council,

This correspondence relates to item 7 on the agenda for the January 11, 2022 council meeting, Establishment of Permanent Dog Parks. I strongly oppose the establishment of a fenced-in dog park at McKenzie Park for the reasons below.

Parks and Recreation Committee analysis - I append to this correspondence, the dog park subcommittee report from May 2020 which specifically ruled out McKenzie Park as a possible location.

Park Space For All - The McKenzie Park West location includes a play structure. It is also used by patients, families, and staff at the neighboring Los Altos Sub-Acute and Rehabilitative Care facility. Are children and wheelchair-bound Los Altans truly of lesser importance than a fenced-in dog park?

Environmental Considerations - Fenced-in dog parks generate concentrated urine and feces which must be flushed out with excess water. As a result, the proposed dog park would damage heritage oaks and redwood trees.

Traffic Impact - A dog park at the proposed location will result in parallel parking on Fremont Avenue, which will impede bicyclists and pose a safety hazard for everyone.

For all these reasons, not least the conclusion of the Council's own Parks and Recreation subcommittee, I urge the council to forbear from establishing a fenced-in dog park at McKenzie Park.

Barbara Ade |


DATE: May 20, 2020

AGENDA ITEM # 3c

City of Los Altos
Parks and Recreation Commission
Special Meeting: May 20, 2020

Dog Park Subcommittee Report and Recommendations

Report Date: Thursday, May 14, 2020
To: Park and Recreation Commission
From: Commissioners Stuart Eckmann, Teresa Morris, and Scott Spielman
Subject: Dog Park Subcommittee Report and Recommendations

Background

On February 13, 2019, the Los Altos City Council tasked the Los Altos Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC) with conducting comprehensive public outreach in order to determine resident interest for a fenced-in dog park, as well as for off-leash dog hours in public parks. The current Mayor, Jan Pepper, later requested to the Subcommittee, that the process be divided into two proposals: one for a dedicated fenced-in dog park and the other for a shared space, off-leash pilot program. The design of the workshops and the recommendations in this report are consistent with those requests.

The issue of dog parks in Los Altos has been a subject of discussion within the leadership of this City for nearly ten years. In an attempt to thoroughly assess the issue PARC appointed a Dog Park Subcommittee (Subcommittee) to explore ways to conduct thorough public outreach and analysis. The Subcommittee was formed in August 2019 and consisted of Stuart Eckmann and Scott Spielman. In February of 2020, Teresa Morris was added to the Subcommittee. This report and its recommendation is the product of the collective views of the Subcommittee.

In addition to the current subcommittee efforts there was a previous dog park PARC subcommittee. That Subcommittee consisted of Mike Ellerin, Tanya Lindermeier and Grace Lilygren. There was also a 2018 Dog Park survey.

City Council also requested that the PARC work with City staff to conduct the public workshops. The Subcommittee commends the work of staff, particularly Donne Legge and Trevor Marsden, as well as the rest of the recreation staff. They were invaluable in conducting the workshops, compiling the data from the workshops and collecting public inputs through petitions, surveys and emailed correspondence between August 2019 and February 2020. The Subcommittee appreciates the efforts of residents in the information they gathered and provided, as well.

PARC, along with staff, did extensive public outreach. Mailings were sent to residents that live within 1000 feet of each of the proposed dog park sites. Other outreach efforts included:

- Signs in all parks (not just the parks under consideration for dog parks)
- Paid ad and press release in Town Crier
- Flyers distributed and posted through the city
- Facebook

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- Instagram
- Nextdoor.com
- Neighborhood leaders were sent informational emails

The Subcommittee recommendations are based to a large extent on the dog park workshops. However, all input from residents were considered, including surveys, petitions, emails, letters and public comments at PARC meetings were assessed. In February 2020, PARC and City Staff conducted 4 dog park workshops over a period of two days. The first set of two were conducted on a Wednesday evening at the Garden House in Shoup Park. The other set of two workshops were held two weeks later on a Saturday morning at Grant Park. Details of the workshops and the additional resident input are contained in the staff report.

Additional Information that contributed to the recommendations in this report:

According to Palo Animal Control, there are over 3,800 licensed dogs in the city of Los Altos. Given that there are 10,700 residences in the city, between 35 and 40% of the homes in the city have dogs. (The range given is imprecise because some homes have multiple dogs and some dog owners do not have licenses for their dogs.)

Los Altos has limited parkland (45.2 acres) and limited parks, of which perhaps 8 or 9 provide the conditions to support areas for dogs. The parks are heavily used for sports and other activities and this presents scheduling challenges. As a result of having fewer parks and less open space, it is a challenge to find ideal hours for any type of Dog Park in the city.

Neighboring cities, including Cupertino, Los Altos Hills, Mountain View, Palo Alto and Sunnyvale have dog parks.

Residents of Los Altos frequently drive to other cities to use the dog parks in those cities.

Given this background and information, the following are the recommendations of the dog park subcommittee.

Proposal for a Dedicated Fenced-in Dog Park

McKenzie Park Location Discussion:

Initially, staff recommended that McKenzie Park be considered for a fenced-in dog park. The Subcommittee noted that there were some problems in recommending that site:

For example, substantial capital investment would be necessary to make McKenzie Park functional as a fenced-in dog park. Hardscape would need to be removed, some trees would need to be removed, drainage would need to be improved and fencing would need to be extensive to enclose the irregular area of this park.

In addition, there was concern for the impact to trees from dog urine and resulting necessary watering. Also, protective fencing would be required for a number of the trees. Parking is also an issue due to the site being frequently full of vehicles during the day. Caterpillars, potentially harmful

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to dogs, are abundant in the months of April and May in this park. Although all parks in Los Altos face this potential infestation issue, it is a particular issue for the McKenzie Park site because the proposed fenced-in dog park would be located directly under the trees that are most infested with the caterpillars. Furthermore, a fenced-in dog park at this location would remove resident access to a play structure as well as public benches and picnic tables. Finally, and importantly, the data from the workshops do not support having a fenced-in dog park at this site.

Therefore, given these considerations and the negative impacts that would result from making a portion of the park a fenced-in dog park site, the Subcommittee does not recommend a fence-in dog park at this location. Furthermore, the recent financial constraints on the City budget, as a direct result of the Corona virus, also gives reason to reject a fenced-in dog park at McKenzie Park.

Lincoln Park Location Discussion

Subsequently, and in response to the direction from City Council for PARC to recommend a site for a fenced-in dog park, the subcommittee decided to consider one other option for a location. An evaluation was made of South Lincoln Park, an approximate 22,000 square foot area that was mostly unused and had low traffic volume and ample parking. Drawbacks to this alternative became evident. It made no sense to dedicate a large part of this park to a fenced-in dog park. It would be giving up too much open space. A smaller area of about 7,000 divided into two areas – one for small dogs and one for large dogs was considered. This still results in removing a third of the park from general public uses.

The City was provided with an additional source of input via a large petition in support of a fenced-in dog park at south Lincoln Park. However, those residents did not participate in any significant degree in the workshops, during PARC meetings or via writing to advocate for a dog park at south Lincoln Park. Therefore, the Subcommittee does not recommend proceeding with a fenced-in dog park at this location.

The City of Los Altos conducted a survey in 2018. The outcome of that survey had a number of participants in favor of a fenced-in dog park. However, the survey was not scientific in its methodology. Unlike the workshops, it lacked controls to allow for the separation of resident versus non-resident input. In addition, there was no control for duplication of voting.

Based on the workshops, there is consistent opposition to a dedicated fenced-in park in Los Altos.

One other data point was a City sponsored survey, conducted in 2018. It found that respondents preferred Lincoln Park between Edith and University (33%) for a fenced-in dog park. This survey also revealed desires for fenced-in parks at Grant, Hillview and Heritage Oaks Parks. However, based on the significant resident input through the dog park workshops results, the Subcommittee does not recommend that location or any others for a fenced-in dog park in Los Altos.

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Proposal for Off-Leash sites at two locations as a pilot program

Staff recommended two sites for off-leash hours that would be shared with other resident uses. PARC chose to support staff recommendations. The Subcommittee supports the concept of shared space, given that there is limited park space in our city. These two sites are: The Hillview Baseball Field and Heritage Oaks Park.

This would be a pilot program for a specific timeframe. The Subcommittee recommends 6-9 months in duration after the program begins. The 6-9-month period is exclusive of any closure due to any field maintenance. At the end of that timeframe, an updated report is recommended to City Council by current PARC subcommittee members and staff to determine if the pilot program should be extended or implemented permanently.

The Hillview Baseball Field Location Discussion

This site has a number of time limitations. It is used for baseball 7 months of the year and it is closed, as all parks in Los Altos are, for 2-1/2 months of the year, per staff, for field maintenance. However, the Subcommittee recommends this location because it received strong support in the dog park workshops. The Hillview Baseball Field is currently available weekday mornings and after baseball activities in the weekday evenings. It is also currently available on weekend evenings.

The Subcommittee recommends that dog owners be limited to the grass area and not allow their dogs to run on the infield to preserve the infield's condition. Appropriate signage needs to include this restriction.

Furthermore, the Subcommittee recommends that morning weekday hours continue until 10 am on the days the Field is not being used (refer to hour and timetable below). The hours below will not interfere with other activities in the park and will allow people who prefer to walk later, or who have school drop off conflicts to enjoy the location more fully.

Recommended hours for the off-leash use of Hillview Baseball Field are as follows:

Any adjustments deemed necessary by staff, to hours for the park schedule should be done in conjunction with the dog park Subcommittee.

Morning Hours

Days	Months	Off-Leash hours Start	Off-Leash Hours End
M, T, Th, Fr	Feb thru Jul	7:00AM	10:00AM
Sun, Wed, Sat	Feb Thru Jul	7:00AM	9:00AM
Sun-Sat ¹	Aug thru Jan	7:00AM	10:00AM

1. Except 7:00-9:00AM on Wed, Aug thru Oct

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Afternoon/Evening hours

Days	Months	Off-Leash hours Start	Off-Leash Hours End
Sat, Sun	Feb thru Jul	5:00PM	Sunset
Sat, Sun	Aug thru Jan	4:00PM	Sunset
Mon-Fri	Feb thru Oct	7:00PM	Sunset
Mon-Fri	Nov thru Jan	4:00PM	Sunset

Heritage Oaks Park Location Discussion

The second location that staff recommended as an off-leash hours site is Heritage Oaks Park. PARC supports this recommendation.

Off leash dogs should be prohibited within 25 feet, or whatever distance staff recommends, of the picnic table areas.

Dogs must be restricted from the creek area adjacent to the park.

The Subcommittee strongly recommends that these restrictions be clearly displayed on the main signage and strictly enforced by Animal Control and Los Altos Police.

Hours recommended for Heritage Oaks Park

Any adjustments deemed necessary by staff, to hours for the park schedule should be done in conjunction with the dog park Subcommittee.

Morning Hours:

Days	Months	Off-Leash hours Start	Off-Leash Hours End
Sun-Fri	Sept thru Jun	7:00AM	10:00AM
Sat	Sept thru Jun	7:00AM	9:00AM
Mon-Fri	July thru Aug	7:00AM	9:00AM
Sat-Sun	July thru Aug	7:00AM	10:00AM

Afternoon/Evening hours

Days	Months	Off-Leash Hours Start	Off-Leash Hours End
Mon-Fri	January thru December	5:30PM	Sunset
Sun-Sat	Apr thru Oct	5:30PM	Sunset
Sun-Sat	Nov thru Mar	4:00PM	Sunset

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Comments about Hours for Off- Leash Hours Locations:

As noted above, Heritage Oaks and Hillview, like most parks in Los Altos, are well used. Therefore, providing a balance between the scheduled activities and consistent hours is a challenge. One option is to have the same set hours for both parks that are more limited and the other is to offer as many hours for off leash dog owners possible. The Subcommittee chose the latter.

Resident Concerns

Heritage Oaks Park has a particular challenge in that it is directly adjacent to a row of houses. Hillview Baseball Field is similar. PARC received comments during the workshop and via the submitted comment cards, that residents adjacent to Heritage Oaks Park are concerned about the noise level. Taking this into account, PARC recommends that morning hours at this park and the Hillview Baseball Field do not begin until 7 am. It is our recommendation that the needs and desires of dog owners be balanced with the needs of residents and that all parties share the precious parkland that we have in our city. The Subcommittee recommends that any noise issues be considered as part of the post off-leash trial period discussion.

Monitoring and Evaluation for off-leash locations

Monitoring and evaluation is necessary.

The Subcommittee recommends the following procedures for public comment:

1. Allow the public to submit an email via a City address for emails and hard copy letters to be sent or dropped off with comments.
2. Set up an online comment form that requires name and address in order to fill out the form. Comments with names and addresses will be considered for evaluation for the pilot program. Comments will also be accepted via mail and walk in.
3. The submitted comments will be compiled reviewed by both staff and the Subcommittee.

Animal Control and Los Altos Police will patrol off-leash locations to ensure people are following the rules.

City staff and the Subcommittee will also monitor reports from Animal Control and Los Altos Police Department.

In addition, the Subcommittee suggests that dog owners organize to form a group of Los Altos residents to monitor the dog issues at the parks and to report them to the Subcommittee.

Dog owners and residents should report all incidents.

Staff should report to the Subcommittee any concerns they might have on a monthly basis.

Note: This is not to be considered a complete list. Moving forward, staff and the Subcommittee will work together to provide a complete list.

Dog Owner Responsibilities

- Dog owners will pick up after their dogs, keep their dogs in the designated areas, report any incidents, and avoid tearing up the grass, particularly on wet days.
- Dog owners must control the noise both they and their dogs generate, particularly before 8 am but also be aware of excess noise at all times.
- Dog owners need to be aware that this is a trial program and could be suspended if they do not take proper care of the parks.
- Dog owners must keep their dogs out of the nearby creek and yards and designated children's' play areas.
- Dog owners must abide by the hours and all rules provided by signage
- All dogs must licensed
- Dogs must be under voice control
- Limit of two dogs per human companion
- All dogs must have an ID tag and collar, or harness and owner must be in possession of a leash.
- Hours for dogs must be strictly honored
- Incidents must be reported per signage instructions

Note: This list may be expanded per staff and the Subcommittee.

Per the October 16, 2019 Staff Report, the estimate for the off-leash parks for signage, dog bags, etc. is \$7,100 per park.

Review of the Data from the Workshops

Data collected from the workshops, shows some support for fenced-in dog parks, as well as some opposition to off-leash hours. Comment cards from the workshops are consistent with these sentiments as well.

Support for fenced-in dog parks at one or both of the suggested locations, either Lincoln Park or McKenzie Park, was 38.9% of the 288 respondents. Specific to McKenzie, the support was 10.1% and for Lincoln Park the support was 6.6%. Conversely, an additional 8.3% responded no to the chosen locations but yes, to fenced-in elsewhere in Los Altos. Opposition to the suggested fenced-in locations was a majority at 52.8%.

Off-leash hours results showed the majority of respondents, 63% of the 284 respondents, support off-leash hours at one or both of the locations. Conversely, opposition to off-leash Hillview Baseball Field and Heritage Oaks Park was 9.5%. In addition, 27.5% completely opposed off leash hours *at any park* in Los Altos.

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For complete workshop statistics, see the Dog Park Workshop Results Staff Report (3a).

Note: The number of workshop participants represents about 1% of the Los Altos population.

How long should the pilot program run?

The Subcommittee believes that 6-9 months should be sufficient to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. The 6-9-month period is exclusive of any closure due to any field maintenance.

The COVID-19 Virus - The COVID-19 virus has created uncertainty with respect to the timing of the implementation of the pilot off-leash program. It appears that it may be possible for dogs to be infected with the COVID virus and cause the infection of other dogs or humans. This needs to be factored into the timing of the pilot program, as do the same social distancing requirements already in place. It is crucial for PARC, as well as all staff, to stay abreast of the news regarding transmission via human to animal and animal to human as we move forward. If at any point, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends closing off leash hours down, the City of Los Altos should act swiftly and decisively to do so. The City should consult, as necessary, with the Santa Clara County health Department as well.

COVID-19 Considerations - Public Health Issues.

The selection of potential sites for off-leash and fenced-in areas, as well as the City workshops, were all done prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, shelter-in-place orders, and guidelines for social distancing. The CDC have indicated that dogs and cats may become infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, and they are currently advising people to refrain from letting their pets interact with people or other animals outside their own households.

More recent information from Stanford University indicates that the COVID-19 virus can be in solid waste. The risk of dogs getting COVID-19 may be minimal, but it does exist. Whatever risks that exist may also be increased in legal off-leash parks.

Addendum

1. CDC Guidelines

Recent CDC guidelines are included as an addendum to this report, and the Subcommittee may provide updates as needed. As a result of this new information, there could be potential public health issues from sharing areas where dogs urinate and defecate with individuals and families who picnic on the same turf, and whose children play sports on that turf.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/animals.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#COVID-19-and-Animals>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/pets.html>

2. A Potential Alternative Site at Heritage Oaks Park

Subsequent to public workshop input and the implementation of COVID-19 advisories and the shelter-in-place order, the Subcommittee discussed how and where another off-leash area could be implemented. If council feels that solid and liquid waste is a risk for the general public in the Covid-19 era an alternative might be to use the undeveloped area of Heritage Oaks Park. However, we believe that most participants in the workshop would have assumed the area to be used would be the grassy area of Heritage Oaks Park. Therefore, this section is separated from the rest of the report. In addition, there is potential that any individual who uses any dog designated area (off leash or fenced-in) is always at risk of exposure to additional dog related diseases.

Potential advantages of having a dedicated off leash area in Heritage Oaks Park include: Minimizing risk for both dogs and humans of contaminating shared turf with dog urine and solid waste; the potential for broader hours of operation; and the potential for better compliance with ADA issues, where a solid substrate would better facilitate wheelchair access.

Potential disadvantages: The close proximity to residential properties; and potential negative impact to a watershed area at the adjacent creek. Furthermore, this would require significantly more capital investment to enable this area to be safe and attractive to both dogs and dog owners. Additionally, this has not been reviewed by staff nor presented to the public and this would take significant time and analysis.

Sharing our discussions of this potential site is not meant to bypass any public input from public discussions, but rather to convey an organically-derived idea.

3. Future Additional Needs for Dog Areas

A) All Bay Area communities are facing housing challenges. The State of California is mandating additional housing units, and the City of Los Altos is addressing this with Accessory Dwelling Units and higher-density multifamily development. Sometimes developers are seeking variances in allowable square footage and setback requirements and incorporating as many units as allowed in order to maximize their returns on investments.

Dogs are, and will continue to be, part of the social and emotional fabric of families. The confluence of higher-density living, an overall decrease in per capita yard size, and the desire for families to include a companion animal, mitigate together to add pressures on our finite park space. As result of the higher density and developer maximization, it would behoove The City of Los Altos to *require* that all future high density development in Los Altos provide park space, including a play space for dogs, as well as a separate play space for children. The dog park in Mountain View at San Antonio Village is a prime example of such a park incorporated into a high-density housing development.

B) If the dog park off leash program is a success, consider creating additional off leash parks per the results of the dog park workshop.

From: [carol little](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Dog Parks
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 5:45:16 PM

January 10, 2022

Los Altos City Council

Item Number 7

Dear City Council Members,

There are some consistent facts in Los Altos with regard to potential off leash or fenced in dog park solutions. The biggest is continual illegal off leash use of all parks (some more than others) in Los Altos. Another big consideration is that most residents do not want off leash use, or fenced in dog parks in their parks if it means losing open space/green space (per comments and ballot results during outreach and public comment at PARC meetings), and they do not want the parks to become overrun in a manner that makes it less friendly to residents first and to general use. Additionally, residents, if they live close to the parks become even less favorable of having fenced in dog parks in a park (per the PARC workshop results). Also, there are limited opportunities to place any feature that generates activity or noise well away from homes. Almost every park has homes along its perimeter.

I am perplexed by the fact that Council is trying to move forward with off leash despite the fact that the PARC workshop results provided results in opposition and despite resident feedback against them. Also, why are we not having a pilot program for any potential fenced in dog park? We had a pilot for off leash and we learned that at least a perimeter fence was need and that the field would be torn up after months of dogs and their owners using it. We need a resident driven location to be determined. If we do not do this, why did we bother with the workshops and public outreach? We can do better than this and we were doing better than this when we did the workshops and ran the pilot program.

We will not be resolving a single problem by putting a fenced in dog park in any park in Los Altos. If one revisits the outcome of the PARC dog park workshops and outreach, they will find that almost 53% of residents who responded via ballots during the workshop process opposed a fenced in dog park in any park in Los Altos. Those numbers can be a little deceptive though. Per a staff report 35-40% of Los Altos households own a dog (Staff report for 5/20/20 PARC meeting - [agenda item 3c](#): p. 19 of PDF). Therefore, logically, if 60-65% of the households don't own a dog, 60-65% of residents probably wouldn't want a dog park. As with all statistics, it is how you look at the numbers that determines your opinion.

And yet, there is an effort by this City Council to put not only one but two to three fenced in locations in Los Altos. Further, PARC agreed there should be no fenced in Dog Park until future housing developments could add them to their locations, or until additional parkland is acquired by the Los Altos. This idea of adding more fenced in locations, as opposed to completing the dog park pilot program and revisiting best next steps for off leash and fenced in dog parks in Los Altos flies in the face of common sense.

Park locations specifically: When I review the maps and chart regarding the suggested locations, I feel there is some missing information and then some that is subjective to the viewer. I will address a couple I am most familiar with.

If Staff and Council revisit the results of many PARC meetings that focused on dog parks, they will find that there were petitions and letters aplenty in opposition to off leash and fenced in McKenzie and Heritage Oaks Parks. They both had significant opposition to fenced in or off leash activity in those parks. The petition totals, and letter totals in opposition, were higher than the numbers received via outreach efforts by PARC and staff during workshops and surveys. That means two things, we did to capture the neighborhood well with outreach efforts and if we had we would have had very different numbers at the end of the outreach efforts. Lessons were learned that need to be applied to any decisions and they are not being applied here and now. They need to be.

I also recall there was a potential covenant that might prevent an alteration to McKenzie Park, but that would need to be explored with the help of the resident who made the comment. He can be found via public comments, and maybe a letter for at least one to three PARC meetings.

Heritage Oaks Park gets much closer to homes as one enters the less developed end of the park. There are homes on each side of that area and they are closer than they appear on the map. That means more homes will be impacted by the noise associated with a dog park.

In addition, there is a creek that runs along the entire park. The creek is part of our watershed. The less developed area, and the area being suggested per the map, is too close to the creek to be good for the creek. Keeping dogs off of the creek and urine and feces (either directly or via run off) out of the creek is crucial to helping to maintain the health of the creek. The same is true for maintaining the trees and bushes along the creek. By allowing dogs and humans to trample the area as they come and go to the fenced area, or as a result of owners allowing off leash as opposed to using the fenced area, the creek will be negatively impacted. As The Santa Clara Water district begins to plant more plants along the creek we will need to be even better stewards of the creek area. What will we do, fence the entire length of the creek? I certainly hope not.

Noise jumps and echoes off of Permanente Creek. That amplifies the noise from all locations along the creek, including at the park throughout the surrounding areas. An example of this is when there have been concerts in Heritage oaks and people as far away as Fremont and Oakhurst can fairly clearly hear the music.

There is most definitely conflict with other park uses at Heritage Oaks Park. The area proposed is along a bike/walking path. Placing a fenced in dog park along that area would create at the very least, a detour for folks on bikes and walking through.

McKenzie Park has many people resting and chatting at the picnic tables at the front of the park. Parking is limited not solely due to Los Altos Maintenance activity, but also due to employees from the medical businesses along the adjoining street. Also, if McKenzie is chosen as a pickle ball location, there will not be enough space for both pickle ball parking

and dog park parking. Additionally, if the McKenzie West area is chosen, it is more likely to be viewed as a destination location and that can become a crowd and noise issue for a small neighborhood park over time.

Additionally, a professional arborist must be consulted regarding the trees at McKenzie to determine what impact dozens of dog's urine and feces will, day after day, have on the heritage trees at the park. Also, what about human activity as they walk and compact the earth around the trees? We need to understand what will happen. The trees define that park in both the west and east end.

I will add that selfishly, as a PARC member that is on the JEDI subcommittee, I was hoping the McKenzie West area might become an inclusive musical feature area, and I am pretty sure there were rumblings about adult fitness in that area as well. Perhaps resident doing outreach to learn what residents want at McKenzie West would be wise. Perhaps even wiser is to wait for adding something such as a fenced in dog park to any of our parks until a complete parks plan is undertaken.

Rosita has a large off leash contingency that meets on the field on a regular basis. Putting a fenced in area might allow some to change their behavior, but most will likely simply shift to an open portion of the park. Therefore, consider a small area to the right of the parking lot and along Rosita Avenue near that seems better suited for a small fenced in Dog Park, or even just limited off leash activity, than the proposed area. However, there will be impact on neighbors. Of course, we know that despite large lot sizes, all parks have homes and residents that will be affected by the noise of an added fenced in Dog Park. That is why most residents do not want them in "their" parks.

Consider the facts and base changes on the facts:

- Hillview and Rosita rise to the top for which parks have the most off leash dog activity. Lincoln Park does as well.
- If one considers the workshop results, it is clear no fenced in is what residents prefer.
- Illegal off leash use is a reality in Los Altos parks and fenced in dog parks will not change that situation.
- Resident input is valuable and needs to be considered and included in any decisions regarding what happens at the parks.
- Residents need to have a say in how park in lieu money is spent. Do they want a fenced in dog park? Do they want pickle ball? Do they want basketball? The decision belongs to residents.
- All of the workshop details and results should be part of the criteria when determining the best location for, or against an off leash or fenced in dog option in Los Altos parks.

Los Altos residents want to have a place for their dogs to run off leash and to mingle.

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- Los Altos do not want to lose any green space to accommodate dog parks. This was a consistent sentiment for both dog and non-dog owners when reviewing the workshop comments.
- The total cost is likely to be much higher than is predicted so get all of the facts, such as what will the fence look like and so on, before moving ahead.

It is time to **stop and plan** as to how to determine the next best step regarding dog activity in Los Altos Parks.

Some suggestions:

1. Move forward with the large dog run with the fencing around it at Hillview. The pilot program there made it clear that a fence was needed and that people wanted to be there with their dogs.
2. Have another outreach cycle to determine what residents want with regard to off leash versus fenced in versus status quo. Status quo equals off leash hours in all parks, as is illegally happening now, but changing to allow for legal activity for limited times of the day. In that outreach, present the outcome of the pilot program, the cost of proposed fenced in areas, what the areas would look like and any other pertinent details. The outreach ought to include all people who attended the previous workshops plus as many additional people as we can manage to get involved. In other words, we need to build on what we have done and continue to work with residents to find a solution. We all have more experience and knowledge now.

If Council decides to choose an option provided by staff at this time, they must recognize that by using the limited criteria found in the Parks Plan as the sole criteria to base their decisions on, they are disregarding resident input found during previous public outreach and input. I feel that perpetuates an oft cited feeling from residents of why bother providing input when it is disregarded. I am 100% certain that is not a message we want to generate in our city.

My Requests:

Council ask PARC, or at the very least ask staff, to revisit and incorporate the workshop and public outreach results as part of the criteria for choosing a potential fenced in location. By not using the many components available, there is a presumed disregard and perceived authoritarian approach to the suggested locations and actions.

Please be sure, that no matter what is decided, to include additional limits such as amount of people who can gather and levels of noise allowed.

Please consider only Hillview Soccer Field as a place to put the first fenced in Dog Park in Los Altos. We are so very close to a solution. Let's not rush ahead and make a mistake by dictating where another dog park should go. Getting the job done doesn't mean rushing ahead simply to take the task off of the plate. We've made significant progress over the past couple of years, why not continue to make progress in an organized and thoughtful manner? Why is there a rush at this point?

Thank you for considering my input.

Teresa Morris

From: [Joe Beninato](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Public Comment - Agenda Item 7 - January 11, 2022
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 6:08:38 PM

Hello City Council and Staff,

I am a 22 year Los Altos resident, and don't own a dog. But I believe we should have fenced in dog parks in Los Altos for the obvious reasons including the safety of those who don't own dogs and want to use park facilities.

With regards to the current PDF staff report, I have a few thoughts and suggestions:

1) The Hillview Soccer field seems like it could be a great location as it is generally unused space, and won't be displacing another program. However, the document lists the area as 80' x 100' and there is no way it is that large. It may be 80 x 30' or 100 x 30', but it is smaller than described in the document.

2) We visit Rosita Park frequently and there is already a defacto off leash gathering there many times per week. It's a real issue as my family members have been charged by aggressive dogs many times while trying to use the park for running or other activities. I would normally be supportive of a fenced in location there for safety reasons. However, I would be concerned about the proposed location of a dog park at Rosita as this field is used heavily by the youth sports community, and the location shown would eliminate a big portion of the baseball field outfield as well as probably 2 ad hoc soccer fields based upon the drawing. Understanding how this space is utilized by the soccer programs, and maybe putting a smaller square dog park in the upper right corner on the drawing so as to have minimal impact on the youth sports programs (deep center field for baseball and only impacting 1 ad hoc soccer field) might be appropriate.

3) I am in support of multiple dog parks for dog owners in Los Altos. However, I would strongly suggest that putting in two dog parks simultaneously would be a mistake. Why not start with one at Hillview or another location, gather feedback over 3-6 months, learn from what happened there, and then roll out a second location based upon those learnings? That would seem to be a logistically and financially prudent approach vs. putting in two locations right away.

Thank you for considering.

Joe

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Joe Beninato



From: [Julien Roth](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 7: Permanent Dog Parks
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 8:20:49 PM

To whom it concerns,

As a resident of Los Altos, I would like to voice my support for the creation of a permanent, fenced dog park in both North and South Los Altos. However, this support would be dependent on the location of these parks not adversely affecting the quality of life of any community members living near the proposed sites. To this end, and in respect to the park in South Los Altos, I believe McKenzie Park West is the most ideal location, followed by McKenzie Park East or Grant Park.

The indicated space at Heritage Oaks Park does not seem feasible as it spreads over some of the creek and steep creek banks. As such, I imagine the park would need to be moved significantly east and therefore would be very close to the houses on McKenzie Ave. This proximity would disrupt the quality of life of residents (noise, traffic, decreased parking). While Grant Park is heavily used for other programming, Heritage Oaks Park also sees quite a bit of activity on the weekends (soccer, birthday parties, BBQ) which already cause high degrees of congestion and limited parking. Marymeade Park, given it's small size and how large the planned dog park is, would seemingly become mostly a dog park which does not seem appropriate. To mitigate some of the concerns at McKenzie Park East, I would recommend decreasing the proposed size of the park and shifting it further West. That being said, McKenzie Park West is far enough from residential areas that it does not pose any problems. I have rarely seen anyone use McKenzie Park West (the park space; the tennis courts seem to get regular use), so replacing the grass with a dog park fits well.

Best,
Julien Roth

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Julien G. Roth
Doctoral Candidate
Stanford University - School of Medicine