

Bocce Ball Court at Grant Park? Are you serious?

When I was chair of the senior commission King Lear tried the same thing at a PARC meeting but offered a \$10,000 bribe in return for building a bocce ball court with lockers at every city park. When questioned by commissioners he reluctantly admitted that the high usage at Hillview was a group of less than 20 people. The proposal was then rejected and should be again because there are better uses for our rare green spaces.

The residents that live near Grant Park should weigh in on this before any action is taken. With so little green space left can we afford to eliminate grass areas or to convert patio space at Grant Park or any other park without proper resident input or data or process? Where is the data to support a bocce ball court instead of another amenity?

A far greater need is to add more benches to our parks - especially at Grant. I have pointed out that our current donation policy discourages anyone from wanting to donate a bench because the city treats the donation as a ten year rental and charges \$3,000 to install a bench that actually costs \$350. The park employees installed all 8 Grant benches in less than 4 hours for the cost of a few cement bags and their time. I went so far as to draw up a map of where to place the additional 6-8 benches at Grant Park but PARC and Mayor Eng and other commissioners did nothing.

Another higher priority is to adopt off lease dogs [over 50% of residents own pets] that would cost nothing other than to reserve morning and evening hours for sharing the park with pets. I also understand and appreciate that some dog owners also want a dog park and support this idea as well.

Instead, we keep wasting time with surveys that repeatedly and predictably have only one outcome. That is, pet owners want off leash hours and people without pets do not. We are split almost 50-50 because there are slightly more pet owners than not nationwide and here. So a fair solution is to allow dog off leash hours rather than keeping the current 100% leash hours or considering an equally unfair 100% off leash hours.

Moreover, many of my fellow seniors and adults have become friends and we socialize every day with our dogs while they run free and play together without being harassed by city officials. So, there is much more to having dogs off leash than meets the eye.

As we consider off leash dog hours; Mountain View has off lease dog hours and both Cupertino and Sunnyvale are open to this idea and moving towards it. Not to mention every year when I visit Hilton Head Island the beach allows dogs off leash 24/7 between Labor Day and Memorial Day and otherwise 8-10 am and 8-10 pm during summer vacation period.

And finally, another priority should be to add more basketball courts at other parks because people of all ages can and do use it – as evidenced at Grant Park.

Shame on King Lear and his gang for offering yet another bribe to get what they want. I guess he cannot live with not having a bocce ball court until the new community center is built. Not to mention that Lear lives in North Los Altos rather than near Grant Park.

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