

MEMORANDUM

Date: December 17, 2012

To: Mayor Buxbaum and Olympia City Councilmembers

From: Rob Ahlschwede, Chair
Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC)

Subject: Recommendations on Olympia Off-Leash Dog Areas

PRAC wants to thank the Citizen Dog Park Task Group in their dedicated effort to analyze the City of Olympia's need for off-leash dog areas and their extensive efforts to locate possible locations for new off-leash dog areas (OLDA). The group worked with staff, neighbors, and interested citizens to develop criteria for the establishment of dog parks. The sites recommended below were identified as possessing the needed attributes. Their recommendations were presented to PRAC for consideration at a public meeting held at the Olympia Center, December 17, 2012.

Based on the recommendations of the Dog Park Task Group and public testimony from the December 17 meeting, PRAC makes the following recommendations to City Council for their consideration:

Recommendation 1

PRAC recommends that Olympia initiate phased development of multiple off-leash dog areas. Developing OLDAs in several areas of town will help distribute the demand and make dog parks more accessible to residents. If conveniently located, many users will choose to walk to the OLDA rather than drive.

PRAC recommends that OLDAs be provided in the central, northeast, southeast, and west areas of town, but not limited to the following locations:

Westside:

Authorize Parks staff to pursue a lease agreement and develop an interim OLDA at one of the following sites (in priority order):

1. Church of Living Water site adjacent to Hwy. 101
2. Westbrook Investments, LLC (old Sundberg gravel pit site)
3. McLane Elementary School site
4. The Evergreen State College

Central: Steven's Field

Integrate a small OLDA into the unused NE portion of the park, behind the existing tennis courts. Explore parking options at both the existing parking area and off the end of Adams Street.

Northeast: Priest Point Park

Integrate a small OLDA into the extreme northern portion of the park on the SW corner of the intersection of East Bay Drive and Flora Vista Lane. Utilize the existing 10-space gravel parking area to serve this facility.

Southeast: Kettle View Park

Construct a small OLDA in the area originally envisioned for a basketball court and a "beginner skate node".

Recommendation 2

PRAC recommends the City construct a westside off-leash dog area first. Council's direction to staff was to find a replacement for the Sunrise Park OLDA.

Due to their larger sizes, the potential westside sites will have the most capacity and pose the least impact on neighboring residential areas. Until additional OLDA sites are developed, this site will bear the brunt of city-wide use and must be sized appropriately. The target date for opening the new OLDA is May 31, 2013.

Recommendation 3

Direct staff to pursue establishment of small OLDAs at Priest Point, Kettle View and Stephens Field parks, as resources allow. While this is a second priority, the property is currently owned by the City and could be developed soon if scoping and public meetings are positive.

Recommendation 4

PRAC recommends that the Sunrise Park OLDA be closed Sunday through Wednesday, and open Thursday through Saturday. The park will permanently close May 31, 2013, unless a new dog park opens sooner.

Recommendation 5

- Direct staff to begin negotiations with potential OLDA site landowners on the westside and initiate OLDA design and cost estimates. Any future lease will require Council approval.

PRAC Recommendation

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- Prior to signing any lease, or initiating development at any site, staff will conduct a public process to inform and hear comment on the impacts and benefits of a new OLDA location.
- The Olympia City Council will approve moving forward with a new off-leash dog area.

Attachment: Minority Report