

2013 Council Study Issue

DPW 13-14 Feasibility of Establishing Additional Dog Parks and Alternatives in Sunnyvale's Park System.

Lead Department Public Works

History **1 year ago** None **2 years ago** None

1. What are the key elements of the issue? What precipitated it?

At the December 4, 2012 council meeting, Vice Mayor Whittum proposed a study to examine the general need, feasibility and costs associated with constructing additional dog parks within the City of Sunnyvale's open space system. Dog owners have historically expressed an interest in being able to exercise their pets off-leash in public parks. In response to that need many cities have built enclosed dog parks with restricted access as a separate amenity in existing parks or as a stand-alone facility. There are approximately 750 acres of open space maintained by the Parks Division and dogs are not allowed in the majority of that space including at Baylands Park, Schools and Golf Courses. Dogs are allowed on-leash at approximately 25 sites comprised of 200 acres and including parks, JWC Greenbelt, Community Center and other special use areas.

In 1990 Council authorized a legislative study issue entitled "Consideration of Dog Runs" and in 1991 a follow-up study entitled "Feasibility of Constructing a Pilot Dog Park." These studies resulted in the construction of the City's only dog park located at Las Palmas Park. The amenity is approximately 0.5 acre in size and has been in continuous operation and well-used since its opening in 1992. Since then there has been no organized or significant interest for another dog park until 2011 during public input meetings to discuss the conceptual design for Seven Seas Park. Neighbors of the planned park requested that an off-leash "dog run" area be included in the design for the new park. Current preliminary designs include a dog run area approximately a quarter of an acre in size.

This study would review parks and other City-owned property and identify a select group of sites for further study. Community outreach would be conducted to engage park users, park neighbors, community residents and other stakeholders to accurately if more dog parks are needed in Sunnyvale and if there are other issues that should be considered as part of the study. Three to five sites would be studied to determine the feasibility of all aspects of constructing dog parks.

2. How does this relate to the General Plan or existing City Policy?

General Plan Goal LT-8 "Adequate and Balanced Open Space". Provide and maintain adequate and balanced open space and recreation facilities for the benefit of maintaining a healthy community based on community needs and the ability of the city to finance, construct, maintain and operate these facilities now and in the future.

3. Origin of issue

Council Member(s) Whittum, Spitaleri

4. Staff effort required to conduct study Major

Briefly explain the level of staff effort required

Staff from the departments of Public Works and Library and Community Services would need to collaborate to determine the feasibility of constructing additional dog parks and how they would affect the current uses of open space.

5. Multiple Year Project? Yes Planned Completion Year

6. Expected participation involved in the study issue process?

Does Council need to approve a work plan? No
Does this issue require review by a Board/Commission? Yes
If so, which? Parks and Recreation Commission
Is a Council Study Session anticipated? No

7. Briefly explain if a budget modification will be required to study this issue

Amount of budget modification required 0

Explanation

The study could be performed within existing staff resources.

8. Briefly explain potential costs of implementing study results, note estimated capital and operating costs, as well as estimated revenue/savings, include dollar amounts

Are there costs of implementation? Yes

Explanation

Capital costs to construct additional dog parks vary greatly depending upon the number, size and design. Operating costs may increase depending upon the amenities any new dog parks would replace within an existing facility.

9. Staff Recommendation

Staff Recommendation Support

If 'Support', 'Drop' or 'Defer', explain

The feasibility of additional off-leash dog areas should be carefully studied to ensure the needs of dog owners are balanced with the interests of neighbors and other park users. The study would engage all interested stakeholders to identify issues related to the construction of additional dog parks.

Reviewed by

Kent Steffens 12-14-12

Department Director Date

Approved by

[Signature] 12-14-12

City Manager Date