



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

AGENDA DATE: June 22, 2016

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission

FROM: Administration Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Proposed Off-Leash Dog Area in MacKenzie Park

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission receive a presentation on a proposed off-leash dog area in MacKenzie Park.

DISCUSSION:

Off-leash dog locations can generate a positive environment for City residents and visitors who enjoy off-leash recreation. There has been a public demand for additional off-leash areas in the City. The Parks and Recreation Department (Department) presented a Draft Off Leash Dog Areas Feasibility Study to the Commission on February 25, 2015. The Commission recommended further evaluation of off-leash dog facilities at Dwight Murphy Field, Ortega Park, MacKenzie Park, Sheffield Open Space and Plaza Vera Cruz. The Department reviewed the Commission recommendations, included them in the final feasibility study and is proposing approximately 0.5 acres of the 9.5-acre MacKenzie Park for an off-leash dog area. MacKenzie Park was selected as a potential dog off-leash location because it provides an area large enough for both large and small dog enclosures, is centrally located in the City and currently hosts dog obedience and agility classes. The proposed site is currently underutilized.

Project Description

The conceptual project includes separate fenced off-leash areas for large and small dogs, double-gated entries, benches, drinking fountain (Attachment). Upgrades to the park entrance at State Street include new landscaping and a park plaza located adjacent to the new Calle Palo Colorado pedestrian crosswalk. Other site improvements include demolition of the former Youth Activities Building and potential relocation of the Lemus Memorial. The memorial structure includes an arbor placed in memory of Dr. Michael Lemus from the Uptown Lions Club and Santa Barbara/Puerto Vallarta Sister Cities, with a theme of diversity. The former Youth Activities Building does not meet seismic safety standards and has not been used for programs for at least 10 years. Retrofitting the building is cost prohibitive. The Lemus Memorial no longer serves its original purpose as a shade and seating area for park visitors using the playground, as the playground was relocated closer to the parking lot in 1995. The Department is

researching whether the memorial, in part or whole, can be relocated or remain within the off-leash area of the park.

Community Outreach

A community meeting is scheduled for June 16, 2016 at the park. Approximately 1,900 mailers were sent to the San Roque, Samarkand and Upper State Street neighborhoods, local veterinarians and dog organizations. The mailer included an invitation to the June 16, 2016 neighborhood meeting and the June 22, 2016 Commission meeting and included a link to a survey about the project. The informational mailer was included on the City's website, social media and NextDoor.com, along with being posted at park entrances.

Next Steps

The project requires development of design plans, review and approval by the Parks and Recreation Commission, design review and approval by the Architectural Board of Review and a demolition permit.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

The Department's FY 2017 Capital Improvement Program includes \$50,000 for the development of project design plans. The preliminary cost estimate for project design, permits and construction of the dog off-leash area is \$315,000. That cost includes development of the off-leash area; park entrance upgrades, including accessibility improvements; and demolition of the former Youth Activities Building. The Department will identify potential sources of grant funding and include the project in future General Fund Capital requests.

ATTACHMENT: MacKenzie Park Off-Leash Dog Area Concept Plan

PREPARED BY: Kathy Frye, Natural Areas Planner

SUBMITTED BY: George Thomson, Capital Projects Supervisor

APPROVED BY: Jill E. Zachary, Parks and Recreation Director