

MEMORANDUM

TO: Park Advisory Commission

FROM: Colin Smith, Parks & Recreation Services Manager

DATE: March 15, 2016

SUBJECT: Resolution to recommend approving an off-leash dog play location at Broadway Park

Attached for your review and recommendation is a resolution recommending approving an off-leash dog play area at Broadway Park. In June 2007 City Council approved revisions to Section 9:45 and 9:47 (Animals) of Chapter 107 of Title IX of the City Code to provide for dog play areas in City parks. The amendments pertain to dog park facilities, city parks, or areas within City parks that are designated as dog play areas as recommended by the Community Services Area Administrator and approved by City Council.

The section of Broadway Park to be designated as the off-leash dog play area will be entirely contained by fencing, signed as an off-leash dog play area, is anticipated to be roughly one acre, divided between a large and small dog run area, and located in the central eastern portion of the park, illustrated in attachment A.

The selection of the Broadway location is a culmination of multiple years of effort by Staff and the Park Advisory Commission. It provides a centrally located dog park, and accomplishes a stated goal in the existing PROS plan. The public process included the formation of an ad-hoc dog park committee, which spent several months working through criteria that were developed as part of the Recommendations and Guidelines for Dog Park Site Selection, Design, Operations and Maintenance. The document provides a history of the development of dog parks in the City, a framework for the public process, and site selection criteria developed after extensive research of best practices across the country. The public process for selecting Broadway Park included a direct mailing to all residents and businesses within ¼ mile of the site, an on-line survey to which 619 people responded, and a public meeting at which 15 people attended. Over 85% of the survey respondents enthusiastically supported the location, and at the public meeting, the vote showed unanimous support for the park.

Broadway Park was ultimately chosen because it is an underutilized park area where no other scheduled park uses would be displaced, there are no adjacent residences, and it is in close proximity to the downtown and Lower Town, serving a growing population of residents, many who do not own cars, and are searching for parks to which they can walk.

Two concerns that were raised in the survey and public meeting included the lack of parking and the proximity to the river. The purpose of the park is to provide a walkable amenity for those who do not have cars, or live in the downtown and are close enough to walk to the dog-park. The two other City of Ann Arbor dog parks, Olson and Swift Run, have plentiful parking to accommodate those who wish to drive. Water quality issues were considered when selecting the Broadway Site. People tend to be conscientious about picking up dog feces within a dog park – more so than in open parks. Additionally, there is presently a large goose population at Broadway Park, resulting in a large quantity of goose droppings. The dog park fences and increased activity will likely decrease the number of geese, as well as their waste.

The plan retains the buffer between the mowed lawn area and the river, with some clearing of the understory between the train tracks and the fence, which would be kept back from the river at least 20' to reduce any waste runoff. In choosing the site a discussion with the appropriate staff at the City in charge of stormwater and water quality took place, and as this site is entirely outside of the floodplain, they did not have a problem with the proposed location.

An annual Off-Leash Dog Permit is required for access to all designated off-leash dog play areas. The permitting process requires that owners provide health and safety documentation, specifically current rabies vaccination certificate and dog license. Dog owners must have their dog licensed in order to apply for an off-leash dog permit.

Construction is estimated to be approximately \$50,000 and is identified in the CIP. A future resolution for the construction contract is anticipated to come before PAC later in 2016.

The project meets multiple Sustainability Goals, including:

- Safe Community
- Engaged Community
- Active Living and Learning

RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING APPROVING AN OFF-LEASH DOG PLAY
LOCATION AT BROADWAY PARK

Whereas, Section 9:45 and 9:47(Animals) of Chapter 107 of Title IX of the City Code provides for the establishment of dog play areas to include dog park facilities, City parks, or areas within City parks that are designated as dog play areas as recommended by the Community Services Area Administrator and approved by City Council;

Whereas, the Community Services Area Administrator recommends establishing a signed off-leash dog play area contained entirely by fencing in Broadway Park;

Whereas, an off-leash dog permit will be required for access to the designated off-leash dog play area at Broadway Park;

Whereas, the selection of Broadway Park as an appropriate dog-play location is the result of significant public outreach;

RESOLVED, The section of Broadway Park to be designated as the off-leash dog play area will be entirely contained by fencing, signed as an off-leash dog play area, and is anticipated to be approximately one acre, divided between a large and small dog run area, and located in the central eastern portion of the park, illustrated in attachment A;

RESOLVED, that off-leash dog permits shall be required for access to the designated off-leash dog play areas at Broadway Park;

RESOLVED, That the Park Advisory Commission recommends City Council authorizes the City Administrator to take necessary administrative actions to implement this resolution.