

AGENDA  
LARKSPUR PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
Thursday, September 19, 2013  
TIME: 7:30 P.M.  
LARKSPUR CITY HALL, 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR  
400 MAGNOLIA AVENUE, LARKSPUR

APPROVAL OF CONSENT CALENDAR. Please note: The purpose of the Consent Calendar is to group items which may be approved routinely. Anyone may request removal of an item for discussion.

1. The secretary certifies that this Agenda has been posted in accordance with the requirements of the Government Code
2. Approval of Minutes from June 20, 2013

PERSONS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA. Note: The P & R Commission is precluded by law from taking action on items added to the agenda after its publication unless they determine emergency action is required. The Chair will allot no more than five minutes to any individual.

BUSINESS ITEM

1. Relocation of Canine Commons Dog Park within Piper Park

RECREATION DIRECTOR'S ORAL REPORT

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

ADJOURNMENT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: If you challenge any item on this agenda in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing herein described, or in written correspondence delivered to the City Clerk at, or prior to, the public hearing.

ACCESS TO MEETINGS: Meeting facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities. If you require special assistance, please contact any staff member prior to the meeting. An interpreter for the deaf will also be made available upon request to the staff at least five days prior to the meeting.
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In the interest of time, the P & R Commission has established time limits. Public Hearing applicants and/or appellants shall make their presentation within 10 minutes, and will be allowed a 3 minute summation period. Audience participation shall be limited to 3 minutes per speaker per topic. These time limits may be waived by a majority vote of the Commission.

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the Commission regarding an item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at the Customer Service Counter at City Hall located at 400 Magnolia Avenue, Larkspur, CA and at the main counter at the Library, located at the same address, during normal business hours. (SB 343, amending G.C. Section 54957.5)

**CITY OF LARKSPUR  
Staff Report  
September 19, 2013**

DATE: September 12, 2013  
TO: Larkspur Parks and Recreation Commission  
FROM: Recreation Director  
SUBJECT: Relocation of Canine Commons Dog Park within Piper Park

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**ACTION REQUESTED**

That the Commission review the Staff Report and recommend approval of a new location for the Canine Commons Dog Park.

**REFERENCE**

Notes and materials from August 8<sup>th</sup>, and September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013 Dog Park Workshops, public outreach and site observations.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Relocation of the Dog Park is the result of wetlands mitigation associated with the Bon Air Bridge Project and is budgeted in the Public Works Capital Improvement project for Bon Air Bridge. The Bon Air Bridge project is funded primary by a grant through the Highway Bridge Replacement Fund in addition to the City Bridge Fund. Additional dog park amenities would be funded by donations.

**ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS**

The Dog Park relocation is included in the CEQA and NEPA revalidation associated with the Bon Air Bridge project.

**BACKGROUND**

The Bon Air Bridge was last retrofitted in 1994. Since that time, the bridge has been classified as "Structurally Deficient" by Caltrans inspectors, resulting in the pending construction of a new bridge. The bridge design and implementation must comply with a variety of restrictions and agency requirements. One of these requirements is the mitigation of the project by creating more wetland area.

The Larkspur Engineering and Public Works Department has been working with these various agencies. These agencies have identified the current dog park location as an ideal opportunity to provide wetland mitigation for the proposed Bon Air Bridge project.

## **RELOCATION OF CANINE COMMONS DOG PARK WITHIN PIPER PARK BACKGROUND (cont'd)**

Staff has held two Public Workshops August 8<sup>th</sup> & September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013, initiated community outreach through email, personal communication, website information and postings at the Dog Park, City Hall, Library, and downtown.

Three potential sites were identified for a new dog park: Niven Park, the north end of Piper Park and the south end of Piper Park near the Police building. The Public outreach identified strong support for the southern Piper Park location adjacent to the Police Station.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

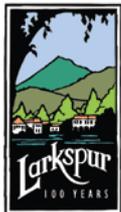
Based on the research completed to date and the Public Outreach data, staff recommends the new Dog Park be located at the South end of Piper Park adjacent to the Police Building.

Attachment:  
Powerpoint presentation printout

# Canine Commons Dog Park



Parks & Recreation Meeting  
Sept 19, 2013



Larkspur Park & Rec Department  
& Public Works Department

## Environmental Concerns

- This location is a sensitive wetlands area. Environmental regulatory agencies, including RWQCB, Army Corps of Engineers and California Fish & Wildlife have advised the City that restoration to natural habitat is necessary
- The area is habitat for both the Clapper Rail and the Marsh Mouse
- Both the Bon Air Bridge Project and the maintenance of the City storm drainage system (outfalls and drainage ditches) require mitigation, the restoration the dog park to wetlands area will meet a portion of the mitigation requirement and retain the habitat enhancement in Larkspur



## Community Concerns

The existing dog park does not adequately meet the needs of many dog owners, thus is underutilized. Responses to surveys from the Master Plan outreach indicates the park is:

- Too small, particularly for large dog users
- Lacks desirable amenities, such as dog run and training areas
- Does not provide enough shade
- Needing improved surfacing
- Fence is too short (min height should be 5-feet)

## We Have an opportunity!

By restoring the existing dog park location back to its natural habitat, the City has an opportunity to:

- move and expand the dog park
- create a beautiful passive-use site
- provide Interpretive signage to increase understanding of wetlands importance
- Approximately 90% of the costs will be funded through a federal grant for the Bon Air Bridge Replacement Project

Why Move  
the  
Existing  
Dog Park?



# Public outreach and input

Workshops were held on August 8 & Sept 11 to provide the public an opportunity in an informal setting to:

- Gather information
- Provide input
- Generate ideas
- Be a part of the process



Website was developed to post information for Public viewing

Staff met, spoke and emailed with numerous residents and users of the existing Dog Park



Staff contacted and discussed the potential Dog Park relocation in Piper Park with other Piper Park user groups

Presentation is being made at tonight's Parks & Recreation Scheduled Public Meeting



# What Considerations were made in choosing potential sites?

Where does the City own property that could be used for a Dog Park?

- Size
- Conflicting Uses
- Parking & Accessibility
- Connectivity to trails/Public Walkways
- Environmental Constraints

What is the Public's Input on the possible locations?

Is there Shade & Water?

Can the proposed site be reasonably maintained?



# What sites were considered?

Niven Park

Piper Park North

Piper Park South

The initial Workshop and outreach results encouraged Staff to discontinue efforts investigating Niven Park as an alternative and to further review Piper Park alternatives as well questioning "Is a Dog Park in Larkspur necessary?"



# Genesis of the Cainie Commons Dog Park

1970's

Awareness of the need for dog parks in communities  
Discussions for building a dog park in Larkspur

1990

Original dog park built at Piper Park

2006

Refurbishment of original dog park

2011

Piper Park Master Plan identifies continued interest  
for dog park and desire for improvements &  
expansion



# Dog Park

## Users --

## Survey

## Results from

## Master Plan

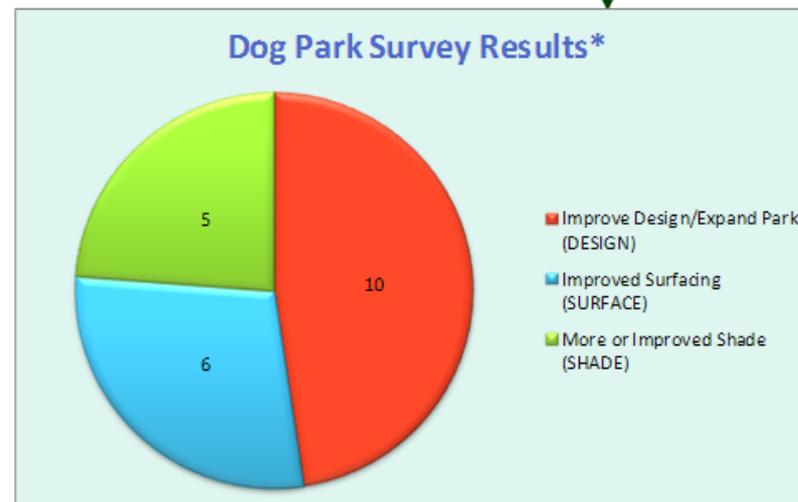
The City of Larkspur hired RHAA Architects to prepare a master plan for the purpose of the serving as a general guide for long-range vision and blueprint for park updates and programming.

Throughout the Fall 2010 and Spring of 2011, RHAA gathered site data and user information to prepare what is now the Piper Park Master Plan.

**"Survey Says"**  
(responses from users of the existing dog park)

Master Plan Survey Results	# of Responses	Area of Concern
• more shade / shade structure	5	SHADE
• dirty surface / replace w/turf	5	SURFACE
• more benches & picnic tables	3	DESIGN
• separate, non-fenced, off leash dog area	2	DESIGN
• better surface maintenance	1	SURFACE
• entrance area needs redesign	1	DESIGN
• expand dog park	1	DESIGN
• dog training or separate dog run area	1	DESIGN
• path around dog park	1	DESIGN
• take advantage of space surrounding dog park	1	DESIGN
Total Responses	21	

### Aggregated Survey Results



Locations  
within  
Piper Park



Two Alternate  
Locations  
at Piper Park



# Proposed Site 1

## North End of Piper Park

Small Dog Area  
(@ 4,000 sf)



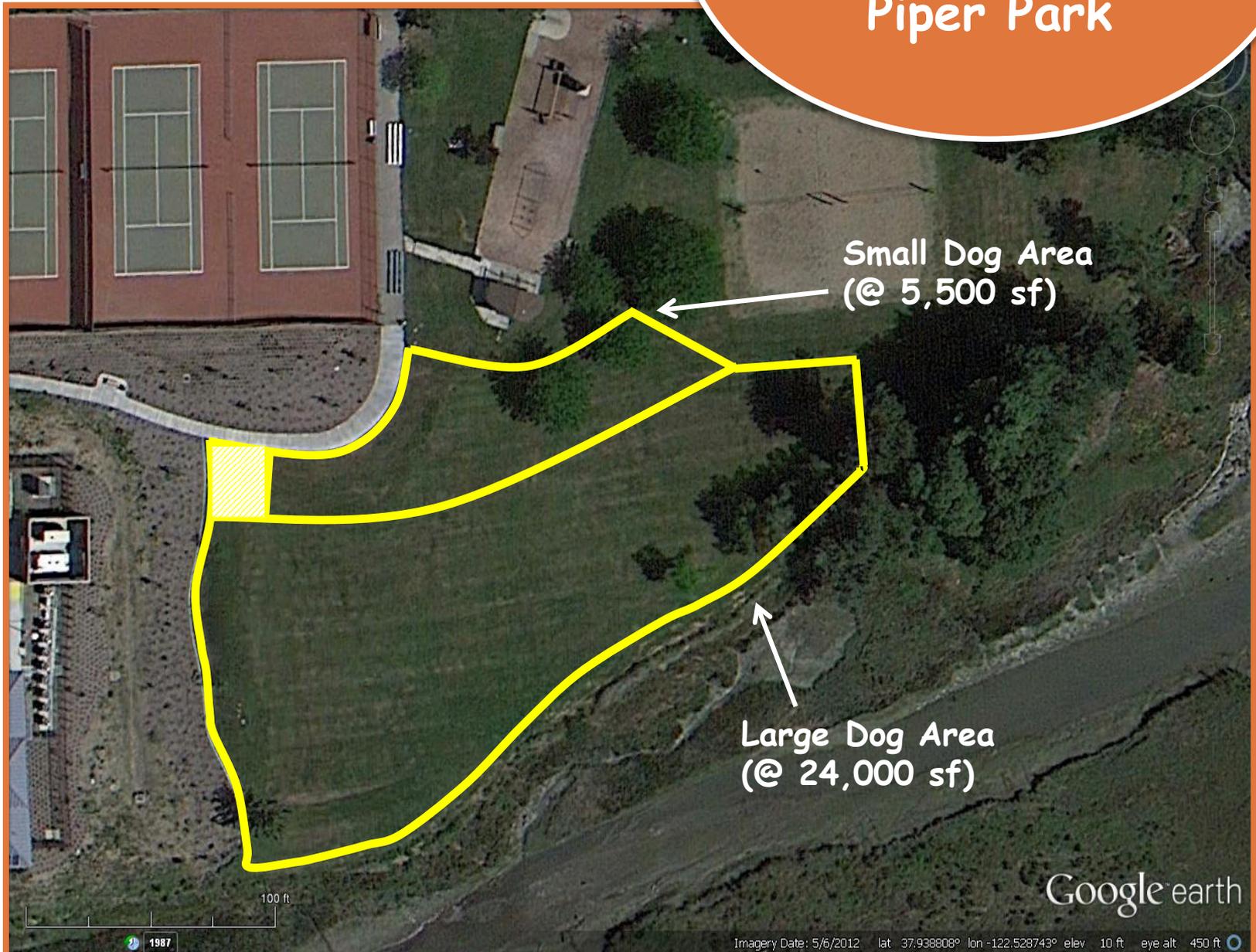
Large Dog Area  
(@ 18,000 sf)





## Proposed Site 2

### South End of Piper Park



Small Dog Area  
(@ 5,500 sf)

Large Dog Area  
(@ 24,000 sf)

Google earth

Imagery Date: 5/6/2012 lat: 37.938808° lon: -122.528743° elev: 10 ft eye alt: 450 ft

Benefits of a  
Dog Park  
to the  
Community



# Benefits for Community & People

Provides seniors and disabled owners with an accessible place to exercise their companions.

Provides residents with small or no yard, condos and apartment dwellers with a place to exercise their dogs.

Presence of dog owners and dogs can be a deterrent to crime elsewhere in the park.

Fosters a sense of community. Dogs serve as a social lubricant, facilitating conversations among strangers and opportunity for sharing information about responsible pet ownership.

A dog park will keep dogs within its confines and away from children, joggers and people who prefer not to be around dogs.



## Benefits for Dogs

- Give dogs a place to exercise safely, thus reducing undesirable behavior that can affect non-dog owners, such as barking and escaping.
- Dogs get exposure to other dogs and people at a dog park, thus promoting better socialization behavior in other environments.
- Helps enforcement of dog-control laws by providing a place where dogs can be off-leash. Regular parks and open space areas, if they allow dogs at all, require them to be on-leash.

# DOG PARKS - BENEFITS FOR PEOPLE AND DOGS



## Why off-Leash?

### off-Leash Time = Healthier Dogs

Many dogs spend all day in crates, indoors or small yards. Dogs with off-leash time:

- can run freely and get better exercised
- are less territorial off-leash, which improves their sociability with other dogs and people
- are more mentally stimulated and tend to bark less, bite less and are less aggressive



### "Do Fence Me In!"

- People already bring their dogs to play off-leash at Niven and Piper Parks. Creating a fenced dog park will help separate dogs and people.
- Some children and adults are afraid of dogs **even when they are leashed**. Having a dog park reduces their likelihood of encountering dogs at the park, resulting in a safer, more pleasant experience for **all** park users.

### Dog owners are park users too!

- Recreating with one's dog — throwing a ball, frisbee, running, walking—**benefits dog owners** as much as their dogs
- Inside a dog park, owners have less worry about their dogs bothering the general public
- A dog park is a legitimate park feature as much as sports fields, playgrounds and gardens



## Next Steps:

- 1) Parks & Recreation Commission makes a recommendation to city council as to the location of a new Dog Park
- 2) City Council directs Staff on proceeding with design and relocation of the Dog Park
- 3) Staff holds a Design Input Workshop for the Public and their Furry Friends to provide input on features for the new Dog Park
- 4) Staff completes design and permitting for the construction
- 5) Build it!



Questions

&

Answers

