

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

<p>AGENDA TITLE: Off-Leash Dog Area Pilot Site Selection Discussion DEPARTMENT: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services (PRCS) PRESENTED BY: Dick Deal, Director PRCS Maureen Colaizzi, Parks Project Coordinator</p>

PROBLEM/ISSUE STATEMENT:

This staff report provides Council with background and information regarding the Off-Leash Dog Area pilot site selections recommended for approval by the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services (PRCS) Board on October 23, 2008. Park Board recommended approval of two off-Leash dog area pilot sites to be designed and built in 2009 per the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). A one-year monitoring program will provide ongoing evaluation for the PRCS Board to determine if these sites are viable for long term use. These improvements will be funded by the voter supported Parks, Trails and Open Space Bond. This project supports the completion of Council Goal #4: Complete the projects of the 2006 Parks and Open Space Bond.

Similar to the many other recreational activities that are offered in Shoreline's parks and open spaces, the PRCS Board supports the development of an Off-Leash Dog Area Program that establishes a system of off-leash areas that provide a safe place for community members to recreate with their dogs as they exercise, play and socialize off-leash. King County Animal Control estimates that there are over 12,000 dogs owned by Shoreline residents.

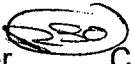
In 2005, an interested group of Shoreline dog owners, ShoreDog, approached the PRCS Board about locating an area for off-leash dogs in Shoreline. The PRCS Board developed a subcommittee to recommend a suitable site. A community survey indicated that citizens felt an off-leash area was a need for the City. The PRCS Board recommended to the City Council that funds for an off-leash dog area be included in the Open Space, Parks & Trail Bond Issue. With approval of the Bond by voters in May 2006, the City has \$150,000 for the development of off-leash dog areas in Shoreline. In November 2006, the PRCS Board recommended that a more comprehensive study be done. In 2007, the PRCS Board formed another subcommittee, known as the Off-Leash Dog Area (OLDA) Study Group, to identify promising pilot sites in the City. The OLDA Study Group included eight community volunteers and two PRCS Board members. Their goal was to identify locations that are distributed throughout Shoreline, providing a system that serves the community with off-leash dog areas. This report summarizes their work in identifying two pilot sites within Shoreview Park and Richmond Beach Saltwater Park.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

- The 2006 Parks and Open Space Bond will fund \$150,000 to locate, design and construct the off-leash dog areas.

RECOMMENDATION

This report is intended for Council information, questions, and discussion and no final action is requested. Staff will return with a formal recommendation asking Council approval of the pilot sites recommended by the PRCS Board later in January.

Approved By: City Manager  City Attorney ____

BACKGROUND:

Off-Leash Dog Area Pilot Sites Recommendation

The PRCS Board has been providing guidance and review of the Off-Leash Dog Area Study Group. The PRCS Board has discussed the off-leash dog area process at 10 meetings since November 2006 including reviewing the off-leash dog area program guidelines, public comment, six most promising sites and the final recommendation. At their meeting on October 23, 2008, the PRCS Board accepted the recommendation of the Off-Leash Dog Area Study Group for two pilot off-leash dog areas located in Shoreview Park and Richmond Beach Saltwater Park.

The Off-Leash Dog Area Study Group has conducted a seventeen month process of research, criteria development, site visits and consideration of 38 potential sites in Shoreline. From that extensive list, fourteen were identified for thorough evaluation as potential pilot sites followed by a screening to six most promising sites. In June 2008, the OLDA study Group presented their six most promising sites to the public. Some sites that were identified as promising sites by the OLDA Study Group were not in city ownership. These sites will require additional time to work with agency owners for future potential use (Aldercrest Annex, Open Space at Metro North Base and the SCC Greenwood Parking Lot and Fircrest property). During the summer, the OLDA Study Group reviewed new information and identified two pilot site locations to test both timed-use and traditional use approaches. Both Richmond Beach Saltwater Park and Shoreview Park are owned by the City and therefore available for immediate implementation.

The Off-Leash Dog Area Study Group hosted the final public presentation on October 29, 2008 and provided a public comment period through November. The PRCS Board reviewed public comment at the November 20th meeting and asked Staff to set a date with Council to present the recommendations. The PRCS Board would like to design and construct the two pilot sites in the spring of 2009 at Shoreview Park and the fall of 2009 at Richmond Beach Saltwater Park.

Richmond Beach Saltwater Park

The 1.2-acre beach area south of the pedestrian bridge which currently receives unauthorized off-leash use is being considered for an unfenced, seasonal timed-use site (November-April) to avoid peak warm weather times. There are dog parks in the Puget Sound region that are located on waterways including Puget Sound, Lake Washington and the Sammamish River. The south beach area is one of the few sites in Shoreline that offers water access. The site is bordered by Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) property to the east and south and Puget Sound to the west. See Exhibit A, Pilot Site Recommendations.

Shoreview Park

This 2.5-acre parking lot is located adjacent to Shoreline Community College (SCC) in Shoreview Park and was unofficially used as student parking until September 2007. Now the site is readily available for use as a pilot off-leash dog area. The site has two entry points with walk-in access from the lower Shoreview parking lot and vehicle access through SCC property. The site would be easily modified for off-leash use and is recommended as a traditional off-leash area. Staff has discussed gaining vehicular

access through the SCC campus with SCC Staff. Approval for vehicle access is pending. See Exhibit A.

Possibility for a Land Conversion

The Shoreview Lot site has had a longtime history of use by the SCC, the City and SCC Staff have discussed the possibility of converting this land to SCC ownership and in turn converting some of the SCC land to City ownership. The SCC Greenwood parking Lot was discussed for that conversion. The OLDA Study Group identified the Greenwood Lot as one of their most promising sites in June 2008. See Exhibit F, Greenwood Lot. However, the OLDA Study Group did not recommend this site because it was not available for use by the 2009 project schedule. The Shoreview Park site will be minimally amended during the pilot period. Should the site need to be relocated the amenities are transportable. Staff will schedule a future meeting with Council to discuss the idea of a possible land conversion at a future meeting. If the City Council and the SCC Board of Trustees agree that a land conversion should be considered a public process will follow to solicit thoughts from the community.

Public Involvement Process

Community involvement is vital to the success of the Off-Leash Dog Area Program. The PRCS Department conducted two public presentations and devoted one regular meeting of the PRCS Board to share proposed sites and answer questions: June 12, October 23, 29 2008. There was additional opportunity for public comment at 10 meetings of the PRCS Board where the off-leash dog area program was discussed between November 2006 and November 2008. In addition, the Off-Leash Dog Area Study group informed all neighborhood associations of their work. The OLDA Study Group was invited to speak at the Richmond Beach and Echo Lake Neighborhood Associations.

Numerous website, "Currents", "Enterprise" and public post card announcements and informational articles were prepared throughout the seventeen month process. All together, the City received nearly 300 comments from citizens and interested non-residents. Attendance ranged from 30 to 100 people at the two public presentations, one regular PRCS Board meeting and additional neighborhood meetings. It is evident that the off-leash dog area discussions were important to the people of Shoreline.

The PRCS Department hired ReadWagoner, a public involvement firm, to assist the City with the public involvement process. They assisted Staff by facilitating the two public presentations and one working session of the OLDA Study Group and preparing printed materials used to communicate the work of the OLDA Study Group. See Exhibit B, Fact Sheet and Exhibit C Frequently Asked Questions.

Environmental Review

Examples exist in the Puget Sound region for off-leash areas that co-exist with wildlife and nature. In these cases, the community partners have become the environmental stewards of the sites. It is the intent of the City of Shoreline's Off-Leash Dog Area Program, that community partners become the stewards of proposed sites to help improve the sites' natural and environmental conditions. The non-profit group, ShoreDog, has expressed interest in this stewardship.

The Off-Leash Dog Area Study Group reviewed the sites being considered with the State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) Checklist. An environmental study was prepared for the Planning and Development Services (PADS) Department that addresses best management practices to maintain water quality and dog waste removal for the Richmond Beach Saltwater Park site. The study was reviewed by the PADS Department and determined to be exempt from the Shoreline Development Code's Critical Areas Ordinance, the Department of Ecology's Shoreline Management Act (SMA) and SEPA. See Exhibit D, Letter of Determination

To create a baseline for understanding the existing environmental conditions at Richmond Beach Saltwater Park, a water quality sampling program has begun. This sampling program will continue throughout 2009 to provide background data for the monitoring program. The water quality monitoring will continue at the beach from year to year if the pilot site is determined to be a good long term site.

Pilot Site Monitoring Program

Pilot sites will be monitored for up to one year. The PRCS Depart will evaluate the sites and report to the PRCS Board on an ongoing basis to determine if these sites are viable for long term use. The City is committed to a long-term monitoring program to evaluate any social or environmental changes that result in measurable adverse effects to the sites. If environmental or social degradation becomes apparent after operation of the dog off-leash areas, then Shoreline's Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department will initiate a series of actions to assess the severity of impacts, the effectiveness of the waste collection system, the choice of the off-leash area location, and any adaptive management measures. The City will work with dog off-leash area supporters and user groups to address potential education, site management, and behavior problems that may cause or contribute to animal waste problems. The City will take any reasonable actions it deems necessary to provide well-maintained and well functioning dog off-leash areas that preserve the Saltwater Park marine shoreline ecological health and functions and forest habitat in Shoreview Park.

History of the Off-Leash Program in Shoreline

By ordinance, the City requires dogs to be on leash in all public parks and open spaces in Shoreline. The vision of an Off-Leash Dog Area Program is to provide a place for dog owners to enjoy leisure activities similar to other recreational activities in Shoreline's parks and open spaces; provide a place where dog owners can socialize together fostering a sense of community; and to promote socialization and health of dogs, responsible dog ownership and reduced violations of the leash law.

In 2005, an interested group of Shoreline residents approached the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services (PRCS) Board about locating an area for off-leash dogs in Shoreline. The PRCS Board developed a subcommittee to recommend a suitable site. A community survey conducted in 2005 indicated that citizens felt an off-leash area was a need for the City. The PRCS Board recommended to the City Council that funds for an off-leash dog area be included in the Open Space, Parks & Trail Bond Issue. With approval of the Bond by voters in May 2006, the City has \$150,000 for the development of off-leash dog areas in Shoreline. In November 2006, after review of this subcommittee's work, the PRCS Board recommended that a more comprehensive study be done in 2007-08 to identify potential sites.

2007/08 Off-Leash Dog Area Study Group

The Off-Leash Dog Area Study Group consisting of two PRCS Board members and eight community volunteers were selected by the PRCS Board from a group of over 27 citizens who responded to the May 2007 "Currents" article requesting volunteers to participate in a work group. This volunteer committee has been working since the July 2007 to identify promising pilot sites in the City. Their goal was to identify locations that are distributed throughout Shoreline, providing a system that serves the community with off-leash dog areas. The Study Group was tasked with:

- reviewing work of past Off-Leash Dog Area Study Group;
- re-evaluating nearby off-leash areas;
- re-establishing site criteria for an off-leash area in Shoreline;
- reviewing and finalizing the list of available sites for an off-leash area in Shoreline;
- re-soliciting input from citizens by way of a public meeting;
- evaluating rules and regulations of nearby off-leash areas and establish rules and regulations for such an area in Shoreline;
- evaluating management and maintenance options, including cost, of current off-leash areas, and establish management and maintenance policy;
- evaluating agreements between other cities and their off-leash area committees;
- presenting findings and recommending sites to the PRCS Board.

The mission developed by the Study Group for their work was to develop a program for off-leash dog use that was guided by a commitment to environmental stewardship, best management practices for dogs in the urban environment and a public participation process that incorporates input from all stakeholders and partnerships with neighborhoods and citizens.

They began by reviewing past research done in preparation for the bond issue, then proceeded with additional investigation into facilities across the county and review trips to regional sites. Their review included physical attributes of the sites as well as the rules and management practices that kept them safe and viable. Through additional research from many cities throughout the region and country, they developed a set of criteria to use in evaluating potential sites and a list of 38 open space sites in Shoreline. Each site was visited by members and subsequent meetings were focused on evaluation of the sites in relation to the established criteria. This report summarizes their work in identifying two pilot sites within Shoreview Park and Richmond Beach Saltwater Park.

System-wide Approach

Thirty-eight (38) potential sites were inventoried as possible off-leash dog areas in Shoreline. The list included City, other agency and private property within the city limits. The OLDA Study Group recommended a long term system-wide approach to providing an off-leash dog program for Shoreline in which there is a system of sites that are broadly-distributed, serving different parts of the city.

After nearly 18 months of rigorous review by the OLDA Study Group, 14 sites met or exceeded the criteria. See page 7 of this report for a list of the criteria. Following an April 2008 OLDA Study Group working session, six sites were determined to best meet all of the requirements for a successful off-leash dog area site. In October 2008 after further investigation and receipt of public comment, the OLDA Study Group recommended two pilot sites for recommendation to the PRCS Board as a first step for beginning the system-wide approach.

Off-Leash Dog Area Program Guidelines

In December 2007, the PRCS Board approved draft guidelines for a system-wide program to provide off-leash sites in Shoreline. The program included guidelines for site selection, rules, design, public participation, citizen partnerships for maintenance and operation, environmental considerations and maintenance expectations.

Due Diligence

In an effort to create a comprehensive process, the Off-Leash Dog Area Study Group reviewed the work of the 2005 off-leash dog citizen committee, visited off-leash sites in the region and researched and discussed management practices, rules and criteria with agency representatives and stewardship group organizers throughout the country as well as Canada. Out of this research, both traditional and timed use areas were studied and recommended to the PRCS Board for consideration in Shoreline.

Traditional Off-Leash Dog Areas

Traditional Off-Leash Dog Areas are designated areas that are *enclosed* for only off-leash use and are designated as Off-Leash Dog Areas during **all** posted park hours. These areas are usually amended with some manmade and/or natural boundaries.

Time Use/Time Posted Areas

Time Posted Off-Leash Areas are designated areas in a park or other public open space, or a portion thereof that are designated for off-leash use during **specific** posted times based upon a defined schedule (daily, weekly, monthly, and seasonally) so as not to conflict with other scheduled and non-scheduled park uses. The areas are usually minimally amended with signage, boundary markers and dog waste deposit stations.

Criteria

Proposed sites for off-leash dog uses will be:

- established as pilots for one year to evaluate use;
- when possible be reasonably distributed throughout Shoreline;
- adequately sized for the projected number of daily users;
- evaluated and ranked using criteria approved by the PRCS Board and;
- designed using the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines for outdoor recreation areas.

Site evaluation criteria used to evaluate the sites for off-leash dog use are as follows (not in any order):

- less used by others;
- potential to be enclosed by natural or manmade boundaries;

- potential to control and treat storm water run-off on site;
- absence of hazards;
- provides an area for people with limited mobility;
- potential for buffer zones between off-leash areas and other active park uses;
- avoids impacts to Environmentally Critical Areas and associated buffers;
- contains both sun and shade and
- provides some parking.

Rules & Etiquette

PRCS Department recommends that all dog owners who use an off-leash dog area pursue securing the "Canine Good Citizen" designation provided by the American Kennel Club.

The rules listed below are a draft of the regulations that will be posted at all off-leash dog areas in Shoreline. Other rules and regulations may apply at some sites.

- Owners must remain with and watch their dogs at all times.
- Unattended dogs are not allowed in off-leash areas.
- Dogs must be leashed prior to and upon leaving an off-leash area.
- Owners must carry the leash for each dog while you are in the off-leash dog area.
- Owners must immediately clean up after their dogs and deposit feces in the containers at the site.
- Dogs with a known history of or who exhibit dangerous behavior are prohibited from the area.
- Dogs must be healthy, fully immunized, de-wormed, licensed and comply with King County Animal Control regulations, which includes having a current rabies vaccination.
- Children under 13 must be accompanied by an adult and must be closely supervised. It is recommended that no child under the age of six be permitted in the area.
- Puppies under four months and female dogs in heat are prohibited.
- Owners are legally responsible for their dogs and any damage or injury caused by their dogs.

Design Features

The pilot sites will receive minimal amenities until after the pilot period is complete. Some of the minimal improvements will include signage, dog waste stations and portable restroom facilities if necessary. Any improvements to the pilot sites can be relocated to another site if necessary. After the pilot period, additional amenities may be necessary depending on the site. These amenities may include: surface improvements, additional pathways, seating, fencing and potable water.

Managing Pilot Sites

The PRCS Department will:

- provide leadership and oversee design and construction of sites;

- monitor sites and evaluate impacts and adapt the site conditions as needed to reduce impacts on resources and visitors;
- provide regular site maintenance including emptying dog waste stations, updating signs and stock supplies;
- and prevent damage due to over-use or inappropriate behavior; help secure funds for future improvements and site refurbishment as needed.

Partnerships

The development of, and the continued existence of, any off-leash dog area property managed by the PRCS Department will depend on the on-going and active involvement of an official off-leash dog area advocacy group such as ShoreDog. See Exhibit E. Through such partnerships several concerns regarding the daily upkeep and maintenance of an off-leash dog area can be addressed. ShoreDog will be encouraged to develop a membership program for users of the off-leash dog area and assist the City with the following:

- educating and Monitoring users;
- maintaining an area's aesthetic and natural character by protecting trees, eliminating erosion, maintaining surfacing to minimize impacts to the area;
- scheduling regular clean up and ongoing maintenance of the area including picking up dog waste and grooming the site;
- partial or full funding for future amenities within the off-leash area;
- communicate and work with neighborhood associations and;
- organize special events as desired.

Off Leash Ordinance

The City will need to amend its Leash Law to allow dogs at designated off-leash areas including the beach. This will be presented to the Council at a later date prior to the opening of the off-leash sites.

Leash Law Enforcement

Since 2006, the PRCS Department has a contract with King County Animal Control for enforcement of the leash law. The implementation of the off-leash dog areas will allow the animal control officer to educate violators and direct them to the appropriate areas for off-leash dog use.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

- The 2006 Parks, Trails and Open Space Bond will fund \$150,000 to locate, design and construct the off-leash areas.

RECOMMENDATION

This report is intended for Council information, questions, and discussion and no final action is requested. Staff will return with a formal recommendation asking for Council approval of the pilot sites recommended by the PRCS Board later in January.

Approved By: City Manager _____ City Attorney _____

Attachments

Exhibit A: Pilot Site Recommendations &

Exhibit B: Fact Sheet

Exhibit C: Frequently Asked Questions

Exhibit D: ShoreDog Poster

Exhibit E, Greenwood Lot

Saltwater Park

1.2 acres owned by
City of Shoreline,
serving Northwest
Shoreline



Sandy beach with water access
Rest room nearby
Contained by water & BNSF fence



Larger park experience allowing for multiple activities (eg: Marymoor Park)

Only water access site that meets criteria

Sand—the most durable surface for off-leash dogs

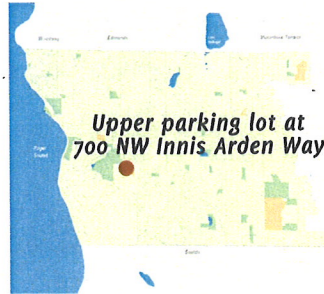
Well suited for off-peak winter use (timed-use)

Parking nearby

"First Step" Pilot Site Recommended for Implementation

Shoreview Park

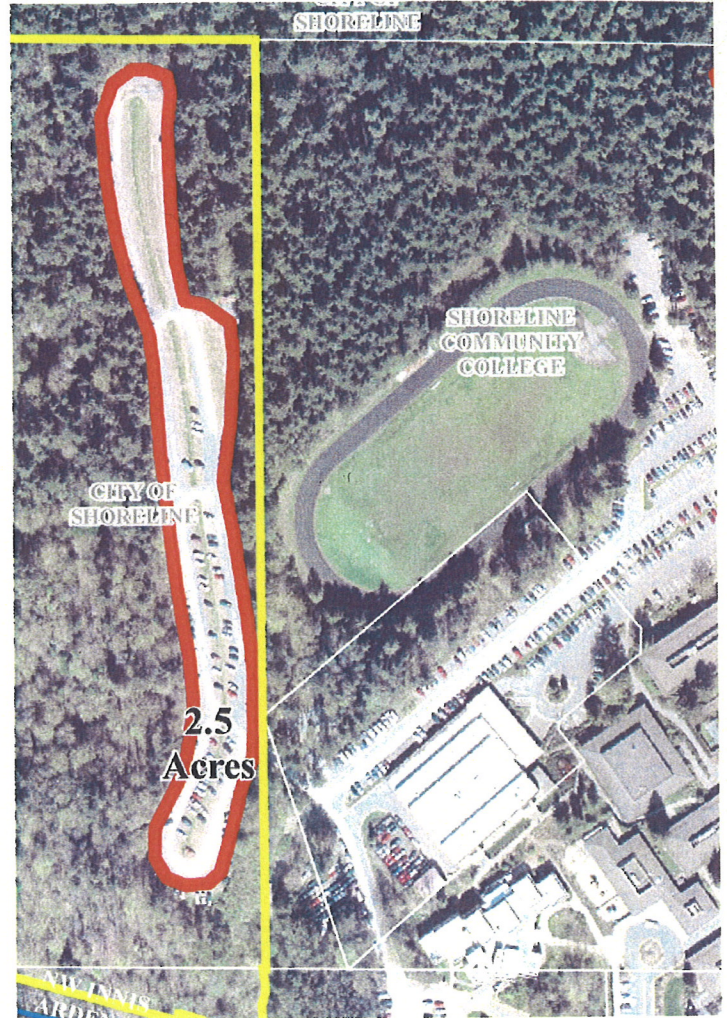
2.5 acres owned by
City of Shoreline,
serving Southwest
Shoreline



Flat parking lot

Easily modified for off-leash use

2 entry points: lower parking lot & SCC



Would transform parking lot back into public park use

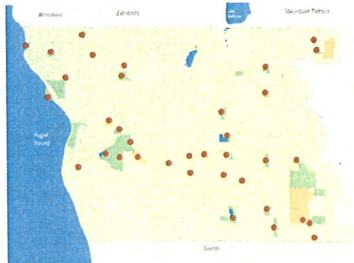
Good access from lower Shoreview parking lot

Good access through SCC during summer & weekends

Best suited for traditional off-leash area

Site Screening & Evaluation Criteria

From 38 Potential to the Two Recommended "First Step" Pilot Sites



38 POTENTIAL SITES —
to which siting criteria were applied

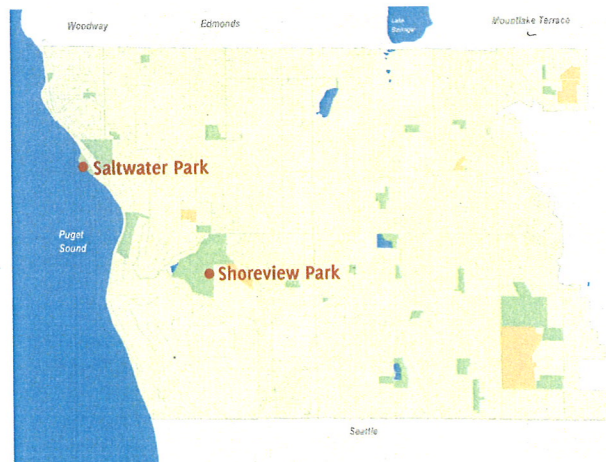


14 PROMISING SITES —
which met all criteria



6 MOST PROMISING SITES —
well distributed to form a system

Two Recommended Pilot Sites — Saltwater Park—South Beach & Shoreview Park



*Readily available for
off-leash use*

*Opportunity for
traditional and timed-
use implementation*

Site Evaluation Criteria

abbreviated Ⓞ in no particular order...

- less used by others
- potential for enclosure by natural or manmade boundaries
- ability to control storm water runoff
- potential for buffer zones between off-leash areas and other active park uses
- absence of hazards
- provides an area for people with limited mobility
- avoids impacts to Environmentally Critical Areas
- provides some parking

Shoreline Off-Leash Dog Area Study Group Accomplishments

SPRING 2007

- ✓ Stepped up enforcement of leash laws — first with warnings, then with tickets
- ✓ Received 26 OLDA Study Group applications
- ✓ Shoreline Park Board selected 11 citizens to serve with three Park Board members and one staff member

SUMMER 2007 — MET 2 TIMES

- ✓ Held first OLDA Study Group meeting — introduced process and past work
- ✓ Established baseline data on licensed dog population
- ✓ Visited existing OLDA sites in the region
- ✓ Visited potential sites in Shoreline parks and open spaces
- ✓ Discussed approach with Park Board

FALL 2007 — MET 5 TIMES

- ✓ Published article in Currents
- ✓ Reviewed “Best Practices” for OLDAs across the country and beyond
- ✓ Drafted Off-Leash Dog Area Program Guidelines — established mission, approach, schedule, criteria, rules and outreach strategy
- ✓ Gained approval of approach from Park Board
- ✓ Gained approval of draft Off-Leash Dog Area Program Guidelines from Park Board

WINTER 2008 — MET 6 TIMES

- ✓ Compiled inventory of available open spaces in Shoreline with potential for OLDA

- ✓ Established relationship with Shore Dogs and cultivated their role as stewards of future OLDAs
- ✓ Established criteria for potential pilot sites
- ✓ Completed review of site inventory — narrowed 38 potential sites down to 14

SPRING 2008 — MET 4 TIMES

- ✓ Identified 6 most promising pilot sites for initial implementation
- ✓ Hosted public meeting on June 14, 2008
- ✓ Conducted SEPA environmental review on 6 most promising pilot sites

SUMMER 2008

- ✓ Collected public comment

FALL 2008 — MET 4 TIMES

- ✓ Present findings and recommendations to community groups
- ✓ Brought implementation plan to Park Board for approval
- ✓ Hosting public meeting on October 29, 2008

WINTER 2009

- ☐ Will bring implementation plan to City Council for adoption
- ☐ Will develop design for selected pilot sites

2009

- ☐ Will construct and open pilot sites for public use
- ☐ Will monitor pilot sites

Fact Sheet



Off-Leash Dog Areas Pilot Project

Work Plan

Summer & Fall 2007

OLDA Study Group conducts research, develops criteria and identifies pool of sites.

Winter 2008

Study Group evaluates 38 sites.

Spring 2008

Study Group screens from 14 possible sites to the 6 most promising sites.

Summer 2008

Study Group gathers public comment on process and sites, hosts public meeting and gives briefings to organizations.

Fall 2008

Study Group reviews public comment, makes final recommendations to the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services (PRCS) Board and hosts public meeting. PRCS Board makes final recommendation to the Shoreline City Council.

Winter 2009

SEPA Review and design ensue for recommended pilot sites.

2009

Pilot off-leash dog areas are constructed and put into use. Site monitoring begins.

2010

Report on pilot off-leash dog areas pilot program prepared.

The City of Shoreline supports the development of an Off-Leash Dog Area Program that establishes a system of off-leash areas that provide a safe place for community members to recreate with their dogs as they exercise, play and socialize off-leash. A volunteer committee of Shoreline residents, the Off-Leash Dog Area (OLDA) Study Group, has been working since the summer of 2007 to identify promising pilot sites in the City. Locations have been identified that are broadly distributed throughout the city to serve Shoreline neighborhoods with nearby off-leash dog areas.

The Off-Leash Dog Area (OLDA) Study Group

The OLDA Study Group was formed from a group of citizens who responded to the May 2007 *Currents* article requesting volunteers to participate in a work group. They began by reviewing past research done in preparation for the bond issue, then proceeded with additional investigation into facilities across the county and review trips to regional sites. Their review included physical attributes of the sites as well as the rules and management practices that kept them safe and viable. Through additional research from many cities throughout the region and country, they developed a set of criteria to use in evaluating potential sites and a list of 38 open space sites in Shoreline. Each site was visited by members and subsequent meetings were focused on evaluation of the sites in relation to the established criteria. (See sidebar other side.)

continued >



Fact Sheet Off-Leash Dog Areas Pilot Project

Site Evaluation Criteria

Is the site under consideration:

- Less used by others?
- Enclosed, when necessary, by either natural or man-made boundaries?
- Absent of obvious hazards?

Does the site under consideration:

- Provide reasonable proximity to available on street and/or off-street parking?
- Provide a flat area that can be used by those citizens with limited mobility near the proposed off-leash dog area's entry points?
- Have the potential to control and treat storm water run-off on-site?
- Contain any active recreational uses? If so, is there a barrier between uses and potential off-leash dog area?
- Provide adequate distance from residences to ensure that activity levels are no more disruptive to neighbors than existing conditions?
- Provide a buffer zone, topographic or man-made, between the proposed off-leash dog area and existing active recreation uses such as children play areas and scheduled play fields?
- Avoid impacts to City of Shoreline designated environmental Critical Areas and to the extent possible their associated buffers?
- Contain both shade and sun areas?
- Contain a number of existing desired amenities?

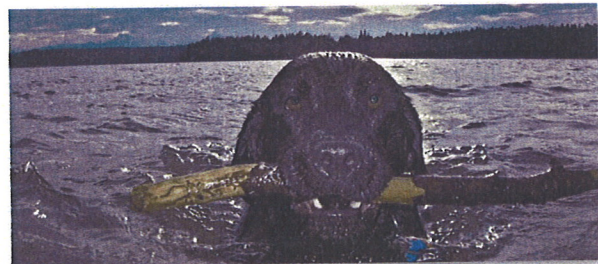
After rigorous review of all 38 available sites by the OLDA Study Group, fourteen sites met or exceeded the criteria. Over the summer public comment was gathered on the six most promising sites. In October, the Parks Board recommended that portions of Saltwater Park and Shoreview Park be amended as "first step" pilot sites for public use and evaluation. Current information about the sites is available at www.cityofshoreline.com.

Project Funding

Thanks to the Open Space, Parks & Trails Bond passed by voters in May 2006, the City has \$150,000 for development of off-leash dog areas in Shoreline. Interest in providing off-leash dog areas was initiated by a 2005 request from an interested group of dog owners to the Parks, Recreation & Culture (PRCS) Board. A citizen committee was asked to investigate possible locations and a community survey addressed the question of need to the larger community. With strong expressed interest, the city included funding for development of an off-leash dog area in the bond Issue.

Future Site Management

Regular maintenance will be provided by the Shoreline Parks Department. In addition, ShoreDOG, the Shoreline resident organization that began the initiative to designate off-leash areas, will take responsibility for the ongoing education of owners and their pets, enforcing rules and providing some site care-taking.



For more info and to submit comments, visit www.cityofshoreline.com

City of Shoreline
Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services
17544 Midvale Avenue North, Suite 100
Shoreline WA 98133-4921

To schedule a briefing for your community organization, contact

Maureen Colaizzi, Parks & Recreation Project Coordinator
mcolaizzi@ci.shoreline.wa.us • (206) 801-2603



Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Off-Leash Dog Areas Pilot Project

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is Shoreline planning to develop an off-leash dog area?

An interested group of Shoreline dog owners called ShoreDOG, approached the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services (PRCS) Board in 2005 about locating an area for off-leash dog use in Shoreline. The group was asked by the PRCS Board to help find a suitable location as part of the PRCS Board's subcommittee, an off-leash study group. A community survey conducted by Shoreline also indicated that citizens felt it was a need for the City. The PRCS Board recommended to the City Council that funds for an off-leash dog area be included in the Open Space, Parks & Trail Bond Issue. With approval of the Bond by voters in May 2006, the City has \$150,000 to identify locations and develop off-leash dog areas in Shoreline.

What sites are being recommended as pilot off-leash areas?

The 2008 Off-Leash Dog Area Study Group (OLDA) has conducted a seventeen month process of research, criteria development, site visits and consideration of 38 potential sites in Shoreline. From that extensive list, fourteen were identified for thorough evaluation as potential pilot sites followed by a screening to six most promising sites. This summer, the OLDA Study Group reviewed new information and identified two pilot site locations to test both timed-use and traditional use approaches. OLDA was formed at the request of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Board (PRCS) to go through a rigorous process of research, criteria and rules development, and identification and screening of potential sites. Both of these sites are owned by the city and therefore available for immediate implementation.

South Beach Area at Richmond Beach Saltwater Park

The 1.2-acre beach area south of the pedestrian bridge which currently receives off-leash use is being considered for an unfenced, seasonal timed-use site when other beach use is low. The south beach area is one of the few sites in Shoreline that could offer water access. The existing sandy surface is the most durable surface for off-leash dog areas and the site has good separation from other active use areas. It offers a family outing opportunity in the larger Saltwater Park experience and would serve Northwest Shoreline.

Shoreview Park

This 2.5-acre parking lot located adjacent to Shoreline Community College in Shoreview Park provides an opportunity to transform a parking lot into public park use. The site has two entry points with good access from the lower Shoreview parking lot and through the SCC property during the summer and weekends. The site would be easily modified for off-leash use and is recommended as a traditional off-leash area.

What is the difference between a Traditional Off-Leash Dog Area and a Timed-Use Area? During the Off-Leash Dog Area Study Group's research phase, the group looked at the potential of timed-use sites as well as traditional off-leash areas, so their resulting recommendation includes both types of sites.

Traditional Off Leash Areas are designated areas for only off-leash use and are designated as Off-Leash Dog Areas during *all* posted park hours. These areas are enclosed using natural or manmade barriers.

Timed-Use Sites are sites that are designated areas in a park or other public land, or a portion thereof that are designated for off-leash use during *specific* posted times based upon a defined schedule (daily, weekly, monthly and seasonally) so as not to conflict with other scheduled and non-scheduled park uses. The areas are usually minimally amended with signage, boundary markers and dog waste deposit stations. This flexible best management practice for managing dogs in urban environments has been used by many major cities to allow multiple uses for one site while reducing potential impacts to any one off-leash dog area.

What will happen to the other sites that were identified?

Nothing will happen to the other sites at this time; they will remain as on-leash sites. However, they will be included in the OLDA Study Groups report that will be used by the PRCS Board in the future to consider other off-leash dog areas. At that time, a public process would be initiated.

What are other cities in the region doing about off-leash dogs?

Several surrounding cities throughout the region have developed off-leash sites for their communities. Seattle has eleven sites with stewardship responsibilities provided by Citizens for Off-Leash Areas (COLA). South Marina Park in Edmonds is supported by a non-profit organization called Off-Leash Area-Edmonds (OLAE), plus Snohomish County offers multiple sites including several parks in Everett. King County has multiple sites including Marymoor Park in Redmond and also uses a volunteer group, Serve Our Dog Area (SODA) to provide stewardship of sites.

Why don't we just continue to have owners take their dogs to facilities in surrounding communities?

All communities have a responsibility to provide facilities for their own community members. Shoreline currently has over 3,000 licensed dog owners within the city that would benefit from a system of off-leash areas. There are currently many illegal off-leash users that are now being ticketed through added enforcement of the leash laws that exist in Shoreline. By providing multiple off-leash sites within the City, there will be places for people to legally recreate with their off-leash dogs and to socialize with other dog owners.

Who is on the OLDA Study Group and how were they formed?

At the PRCS Board's recommendation, the OLDA group was formed. The May 2007 *Currents* volunteer request netted 26 applications for the PRCS Board subcommittee. Eleven citizens and three PRCS Board members were selected to form the group.

Now that the pilot sites are identified, how will they be paid for and maintained?

The construction and much of the regular maintenance will be provided by Shoreline Parks; however, as has occurred at other off-leash dog areas in the region, Shoreline will be looking to the support of ShoreDOG. A volunteer organization, ShoreDOG will provide added stewardship of the off-leash dog areas through volunteer work parties to care for ongoing repairs such as replacing worn surfacing, sectioning off areas for repair and removing invasive species.

Won't multiple users at these sites create impacts on the area and for the surrounding community?

Each of the six most promising sites was evaluated based on potential impacts from use as an off-leash dog area. OLDA Study Group and staff conducted a preliminary SEPA (State Environmental Protection Act) Checklist review of the sites and any with serious SEPA issues were deleted from the list. Considerations included proximity and type of adjacent uses, potential drainage issues, and parking and access concerns. Having a system of off-leash sites and an ongoing stewardship program are strategies to lessen impacts to individual parks by dispersing the users, providing more sites within walking distance of residents to reduce traffic impacts, and providing work parties for environmental stewardship.

Based on each site's location, condition and needs, the addition of various functional amenities may need to be added to support the off-leash use. These design features include:

- surface improvements such as mulch, gravel, grass or sand
- natural or man-made enclosures
- separate gated areas for maintenance access
- dog waste stations with dog bags, trash receptacles for cleaning waste
- signage with listed rules and regulations
- restrooms, portable or permanent.

How do we know that off-leash areas will work? Haven't there been problems in other parks?

By researching other off-leash sites, OLDA Study Group identified both the physical characteristics of successful sites and the necessary rules to make them operationally safe and enjoyable for all their users. They also talked with the stewards – members of groups like COLA and SODA to understand the educational and operational responsibilities that they undertake to avoid or solve problems. Rules are important and they include very specific guidance on who can use the facilities and what responsibilities they have in doing so.

At a minimum, the following user etiquette and rules would apply and others may be required for some sites:

- Owners must remain with and watch their dogs at all times as unattended dogs are not allowed in off-leash areas.
- Dogs must be leashed prior to and upon leaving an off-leash area.
- Owners must carry the leash for each dog while in the off-leash dog area.
- Owners must immediately clean up after their dogs and deposit feces in the containers at the site.
- Dog owners are responsible for the monitoring and maintenance of the area.
- Children under thirteen years of age must be accompanied by an adult and must be closely supervised. It is recommended that no child under the age of six be permitted in the area.
- Puppies under four months and female dogs in heat are prohibited.
- Dogs must be healthy, fully immunized, dewormed, licensed and comply with King County Animal Control regulations, which includes having a current rabies vaccination.
- Owners are legally responsible for their dogs and any damage or injury caused by their dogs.
- Dogs with a known history of or who exhibit dangerous behavior are prohibited from the area.

How many people will use the off-leash areas?

Many of these sites are already used by dog owners as off-leash sites, so looking at levels of current use gives some initial indications. Numbers will likely increase given that it will now be a legal use and also due to population growth in Shoreline; however, the use of multiple sites will lessen impacts on any one site.

Why doesn't the City purchase or lease new land for the off-leash area rather than use existing open space?

OLDA investigated all potential sites within Shoreline, including those that were owned privately or by other agencies. Their search was based on the necessary size and physical requirements for an off-leash area. They then looked at sites to determine how they are currently being used – often by dogs and their owners – and if they had any competing uses. Many can be improved from their current condition, such as transitioning property from parking lots to green space.

What Has Happened in the Process?

The City spent several months hearing from community members beginning with the June 12, 2008 public presentation by OLDA and the city of the work to date. City staff and members of OLDA briefed community organizations about the process and potential sites. After receiving public comment throughout the summer, the OLDA Study Group met several more times to review options based on public feedback and additional findings and to develop their recommendations for the two pilot sites. The Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services (PRCS) Board accepted the OLDA recommendations at their October 23rd meeting. The October 29th, 2008 public meeting is to hear public responses to the recommended

pilot sites. The Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services (PRCS) Board will make their final recommendation to City Council in November. City Council will review the PRCS Board recommendation in mid-December or early January. Following the PRCS Board's recommendation, the City Council will consider the OLDA Study Group's extensive work, the interests and concerns expressed by community members and the recommendation of the PRCS Board in making a decision about the pilot sites.

All selected sites will require some level of improvements. Following the selection of the pilot sites, the City will complete a SEPA review and begin design for each facility. Initial pilot sites will be implemented in Spring and Fall 2009.

What happens after the "pilot" phase is over?

The sites will be evaluated on a regular basis during the pilot phase by the City with input from ShoreDOG. The evaluations will enable City staff to report back to the PRCS Board at the close of the 12-month pilot phase to determine the success of the use, changes that would improve the function and concerns that need to be addressed. Comments expressed by community members throughout the pilot phase will be documented as part of the review.

Can I take my dog off-leash to other parks in Shoreline?

No. All other parks in Shoreline will remain on-leash sites. If dogs are off-leash in other parks in Shoreline, users will be in violation of the Leash Law and be subject to a ticket.

Who can I contact with if I have additional questions or comments to offer?

Maureen Colaizzi, Parks & Recreation Project Coordinator
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Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services
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I just want to play fetch.



**But our yard isn't very
big, so it's not much fun.**

I heard about a place where dogs can go
run and play, and where there are other
dogs to sniff, and my best friend can
throw the ball for as long as I want!

Maybe if I had a place like that nearby,
I'd have less energy for, you know,
chewing up tennis shoes and stuff.

Just sayin'.

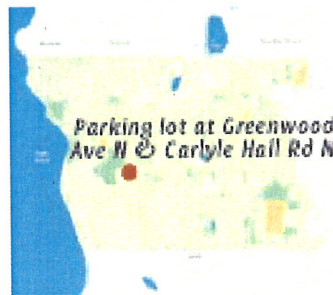


Join us to support
off-leash parks in Shoreline.

Promising Pilot Site

SCC Greenwood Lot

*2.5 acres owned by
SCC – deeded to City
by 2010 – serving
Southwest Shoreline*

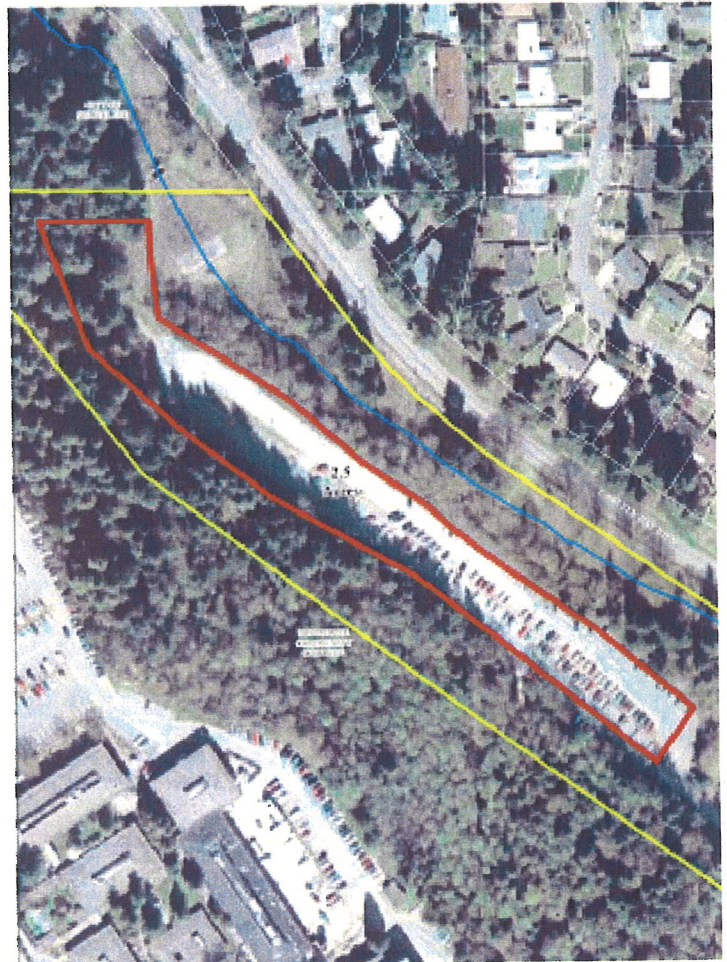


Well-lit

Flat gravel parking lot

Enclosed with fence & vegetation on 2 sides

2 entry points



Would transform parking lot into public park
(gray to green)

Great connectivity to Boeing Creek Park trails

Could build entry plaza with park amenities

Best suited for traditional off-leash area

Would treat storm water on-site

Best for universal access

Frequented by dog walkers

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