

# City of Calistoga

## Staff Report

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council  
**FROM:** Mary Cahill, Community Resource Director  
**DATE:** August 5, 2008  
**SUBJECT:** Recommendation from the Community Resources Commission regarding a Community Dog Park on a portion of the Fair Way extension located between Eddy and Anna Streets

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**APPROVAL FOR FORWARDING:**

*James C. McCann (Signed by J Snellman)*  
 James C. McCann, City Manager

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**ISSUE:** To identify the preferred location for a public Dog Park and to provide direction to staff.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Receive a recommendation from the Community Resources Commission. Discuss and provide direction.

**BACKGROUND:** At the meeting of May 6, 2008, the City Council reviewed and accepted the recommendation from the Community Resources Commission regarding the community's desire to establish a Dog Park. The investigation of the community's desire for a Dog Park, the appropriate elements of such a park and the identification of potential sites had been one of the assignments given by the City Council to the Community Resources Commission through their adopted work program. The Commission and staff addressed the assignment and presented their initial findings to the Council at the May 6<sup>th</sup> meeting (see attached staff report and minutes from the May 6<sup>th</sup> City Council Meeting). The Community Resources Commission strongly recommended establishment of a Dog Park and suggested that no suitable public lands appeared to be readily available. They consequently suggested that use of private property offered by Calistoga Municipal Water be considered for this activity.

**DISCUSSION:** The Council concurred with the Commission's recommendation to establish a Dog Park but preferred that a publicly owned site be considered. The Council directed staff to evaluate potential publically owned sites and to return with a recommendation and a cost summary.

26 City staff evaluated approximately ten publically owned sites and concluded that the  
27 Lower Corporation Yard, Cyrus Creek Park, and the Fair Way extension were the most  
28 practical.

29  
30 At the meeting of July 16, 2008, the Community Resources Commission reviewed and  
31 discussed staff's findings and voted to support the Fair Way extension location for a  
32 Dog Park and move the recommendation forward to City Council at the earliest  
33 available meeting.

34  
35 The following summarizes the staff thoughts regarding the three sites:

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37 **Lower Corporation Yard**

38  
39 The Lower Corporation Yard was initially viewed as attractive due to its size, proximity  
40 to the bike path, restrooms (located adjacent to the little league fields), parking and a  
41 longer term location.

42  
43 After reviewing this location, it became evident that there were many considerations that  
44 would take a significant amount of time to sort out. Many of the issues related to Public  
45 Works operational functions, including soil and equipment storage, the extent of  
46 necessary site work, bike path impact, inconvenient parking, cost (the estimated budget  
47 for this location would be approximately \$250K to \$450K), and timing.

48  
49 This site was not recommended due to the many conflicts and significant cost.

50  
51 **Cyrus Creek Park**

52  
53 Cyrus Creek Park is a small park located at 2029 Myrtle Street. This park is tucked into  
54 a residential neighborhood. This location measures approximately 54; x 100', or 5400  
55 square feet. The positive aspects of this location are easy water access on site, shade,  
56 benches, and fencing on three sides. Site considerations are the small size, lack of  
57 parking, close proximity to homes, and that it is not centrally located for residents and  
58 visitors.

59  
60 This location was not recommended at this time due to its small size and location.

61  
62 **Fair Way Extension**

63  
64 This location is on the Fair Way extension between Anna and Eddy Streets. The  
65 location would be temporary in nature, available until improvements and future

66 development demands initiate the need for the extension to occur (approximately 2-4  
67 years). The useable portion of the site measures approximately 45' x 200', or 9000  
68 square feet, slightly smaller than a quarter acre.

69  
70 The positive aspects of this location are easy pedestrian and vehicular access, limited  
71 site improvements needed, easy access to water connections and the improvements  
72 are accomplished within a shorter timeframe, barring any unforeseen issues.

73  
74 Site considerations include environmental, parking, and support from adjacent property  
75 owners.

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77 This is the preferred alternative due to its location, ease of conversion and relative cost  
78 efficiency. It must be noted that this analysis reflects site conditions and constraints  
79 based upon very preliminary evaluation and that no budget presently exists for  
80 improvement or maintenance.

81  
82 **FISCAL IMPACT:**

83  
84 The Fair Way extension improvements are necessary to establish a Dog Park at the  
85 Fair Way extension site and are roughly estimated at the following:

86  
87 **Construction:** An estimate from the Public Works Department identified approximately  
88 \$50,000 limited site work (grading and surface treatment), water connections, ADA  
89 improvements, shade structure, bench, decomposed granite pathway and shade  
90 structure surface, fencing, gates, to address water fountain and dog water unit, trash  
91 cans, etc. This does not include any environmental processing or added parking  
92 improvements if necessary. The project would be funded through the General Fund  
93 and through donations from private parties.

94  
95 Dog owners have stated their support to fundraise for fencing, shelter, surface material,  
96 gates, doggie bag structure, and water fountain/dog bowl. This could reduce the cost  
97 by \$15,000 to \$25,000.

98  
99 **Maintenance:** It is anticipated that the Dog Park will receive daily trash pickup and will  
100 be maintained 3 days per week for dog droppings. The park maintenance staff will  
101 provide trash pick up 2 days per week as a part of the park routine. It is estimated that  
102 a total of 2 hours per week will be utilized for additional Dog Park maintenance  
103 (approximately \$3500 per year for maintenance efforts). It is anticipated that the users  
104 will participate in regular park work days to improve the site. Additionally, part-time

105 employees may be utilized to supplement Public Works staff, especially for weekend  
106 clean up.

107  
108 Dog Park volunteers have strongly stated that they will assist in monitoring the Dog  
109 Park to minimize City staff impact.

110  
111 **Repairs:** As this would be a new park, the only anticipated repairs might be fountain  
112 repair or vandalism.

113  
114 If the City Council supports this location, meetings will occur with volunteers to define  
115 the support for fundraising and maintenance necessary to expedite this project.

116  
117 Community Resources staff will work with Planning and Public Works to:

- 118
- 119 • Establish a permitting and public notice process.
  - 120 • Meet with volunteer dog owners to establish preliminary design, signage, rules  
121 for the park, and volunteer commitment to park oversight and fundraising.
  - 122 • Updates to Community Resources Commission and City Council at appropriate  
123 meetings.
  - 124 • Determine final design and cost estimates.
  - 125 • Determine construction and operation costs estimates.
  - 126 • Upon budget approval, establish construction timelines and opening date.
- 127

128  
129 **ATTACHMENTS:**

- 130 1. Community Resources Commission Staff Report dated May 6, 2008  
131 2. City Council minutes dated May 6, 2008  
132 3. Map of the Fair Way extension location

# City of Calistoga

## Staff Report

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council  
**FROM:** Mary Cahill, Community Resources Director  
**DATE:** May 6, 2008  
**SUBJECT:** Community Resources Commission Report Regarding Dog Park

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APPROVAL FOR FORWARDING:

  
James C. McCann, City Manager

1  
2 **ISSUE:**

3 The community of Calistoga does not have a defined dog park within the city limits or  
4 immediate surroundings. Many community members have expressed an interest in an  
5 area that could be defined for this purpose.

6  
7 **RECOMMENDATION:**

8 Receive report and offer direction as appropriate.  
9

10 **BACKGROUND:**

11 On August 21, 2007, the City Council placed the Dog Park Project on the Community  
12 Resources Commission (CRC) 2007-2008 work program. The purpose was to explore  
13 areas in the community where dogs could exercise off leash and define the elements  
14 that would go into a dog park.

15  
16 **DISCUSSION**

17  
18 The discussion that occurred at the CRC meetings, defined the benefits of a dog park  
19 as place to socialize and exercise dogs in a safe environment, promote responsible pet  
20 ownership, provide elderly and disabled owners with an accessible place to exercise  
21 their canine companions promote public health and safety and provide a tool for realistic  
22 enforcement of dog control laws.

23  
24 Generally the term dog park, is used where the design of the park and its amenities  
25 make it clear that dogs are invited, not just permitted. It is a place where dogs can play  
26 off leash in a safe environment.

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27 Most dog parks are public and others are private. Public dog parks are typically on  
28 public land and may be using public resources such as land, money, equipment  
29 supplies and labor. To offset these costs most dog parks have an active user group.  
30 Some organize as a non-profit while others are more informal.

31  
32 The Community Resources Commission conducted an extensive review of various  
33 criteria which define a dog park and looked to both public property and private property  
34 options. The CRC developed the following as considerations and criterion for a dog  
35 park in Calistoga.

36  
37 The property criterion that was defined for a dog park in Calistoga:

- 38  
39
- Size minimum of ½ acre of property
  - Safe location, not isolated
  - Accessible by automobile, biking or walking
  - Accessible to potable water
  - Parking
- 44

45 Based on discussions at the CRC and with various interested community members,  
46 recommendations for elements of the dog park were as follows:

- 47
- Entry – double gated
  - Fencing – 4' high and gates. Deer fencing should be sufficient.
  - Shade (phased in at a later time)
  - Water fixtures – for dogs and people
  - Pet waste removal bags
  - Safe parking area close to site
  - Picnic tables and/or benches (phased in at a later time)
  - Covered Garbage Cans
  - Signage (dog and people rules)
  - Regular maintenance
- 58  
59

60 A group of dog owners in the community (Cal DOG), spearheaded by David Johnston  
61 and Rose LeClerc discussed the responsibilities that they would entertain including but  
62 not limited to:

- 63
- Creating Dog Park rules
  - Animal control issues (strays and abandoned animals)
  - Dog obedience classes
  - Promote neutering/spaying clinics
- 66

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67 Supervision of Dog Park  
68 Daily clean up  
69 Signage in town and at the Dog Park  
70 Discussion of funding issues  
71

72 At the conclusion of their research, the CRC determined that public lands are not readily  
73 available for use as a dog park without significant expense. Consequently, the CRC  
74 explored potential privately owned sites. The vacant property at the Calistoga Beverage  
75 Company was identified and the owner has indicated their support for the venture (see  
76 attached letter from Mr. Chris Canning).  
77

78 At this point, staff believes that interest exists within the community for establishment of  
79 a dog park. Further, suitable public and private sites exist within Calistoga for the use.  
80 Staff requests Council input and direction regarding proceeding with the establishment  
81 of a dog park. Should sufficient Council interest exist, staff will evaluate in detail the site  
82 options available, the costs to create a suitable park, the options and associated costs  
83 for on-going maintenance and operation and will return to Council for action.  
84

85 **FISCAL IMPACT:**  
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87 The fiscal impact is unknown at this time. The costs will be determined by the selected  
88 site and would correspond to the improvements needed at the site and any costs  
89 associated such as labor, equipment, ongoing maintenance, utilities and other potential  
90 resources.  
91

92 The revenue sources are unknown at this time. However, there is a group of dog  
93 owners in the community who have expressed an interest in being involved in both the  
94 fundraising, in kind donations and ongoing volunteer efforts to improve and monitor a  
95 site in order to make a dog park become a reality.  
96

97  
98 **ATTACHMENTS**  
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- 100 1. Letter from Chris Canning, Calistoga Beverage company
- 101 2. Communication from David Johnston and Rose LeClerc
- 102 3. CRC staff report January 16, 2008

**MINUTE EXCERPT**  
**CITY COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING**  
**TUESDAY, MAY 6, 2008 - 7:00 P.M.**  
**CALISTOGA COMMUNITY CENTER**

**GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

**11. Report from the Community Resources Commission regarding interest in establishing a Community Dog Park.**

*Note: **Communication A** was received from Scott Atkinson (2103 Oat Hill Court) regarding the community dog park.*

**Community Resources Director Cahill** introduced this item. She stated that the Community Resources Commission identified this topic as one to pursue in this year's work program. She reviewed the Commission's efforts and key findings. She noted that substantial interest exists to establish a dog park and that a publically owned and operated site is preferred. She added that suitable public sites are not readily available. She summarized the offer by the Calistoga Beverage Company to allow use of their property as a temporary dog park.

**Rose LeClerc, Cal DOG member**, stated the benefits of a dog park in the community and their group that could volunteer their time in building the dog park. She stated that the cost to construct a dog park is minimal.

**Mayor Gingles** agreed that a dog park is desired and suggested lower Washington Street.

**Vice Mayor Dunsford** agreed; he does not support a temporary dog park on the private property. He thanked Scott Atkinson for his letter regarding the proposed dog park (*Communication A*).

**Councilmember Kraus** stated that he agrees with a community dog park and suggested that the City Manager direct staff to develop a plan; determine the best location; prioritize the project; calculate staff time and costs and bring options back to the Council for consideration.

**City Manager McCann** summarized the direction from City Council to move forward in planning for a community dog park, explore available public properties, prepare a cost evaluation to establish and maintain a dog park.





# POTENTIAL DOG PARK- Fairway Extension