



**Date:** October 28, 2015  
**To:** Mayor and City Council  
**From:** Tim Tucker, City Engineer  
**Subject:** Dog Park Informational Report

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**Recommendation**

By motion, accept Dog Park informational report.

**Background**

Twice during the last twelve years, the Parks Recreation Marina and Cultural Commission (PRMCC) devoted time to address requests for installing a dog park in Martinez. The first evaluation identified only one parcel suitable for a dog park. The area identified was beneath the railroad trestle off Alhambra Way. Unfortunately, the selected area is close to a residential area and is encumbered by an East Bay Regional Park District trail. There was little public interest shown at the time and no further action was taken. The PRMCC did include a dog park being listed in the current Park System Master Plan under Section J4 “Proposed Park Additions, Amenities, Facilities & Design Elements.”

More recently, the PRMCC formed a Dog Park Subcommittee to review the possibility of establishing a dog park in Martinez. The Subcommittee worked for approximately two years and included:

- Visits to nearby dog parks
- Meeting with maintenance staff from cities with dog parks
- Talking to dog park users in other cities
- Researching amenities and design criteria needed to construct a dog park
- Evaluating list of City owned property for potential dog park sites
- Conducting site visits for potential City locations
- Providing updates to the PRMCC
- Recommendation of a preferred location (Alhambra Ave Detention Basin – South end)

Again, as stated above, during the updates to the PRMCC, there was little public interest of support voiced on this topic. However, The PRMCC did include a dog park listing in the current Park System Master Plan, under Section J4 “Proposed Park Additions, Amenities, Facilities & Design Elements.” On July 15, 2014, the PRMCC was provided the option to keep the dog park listed in the Parks Master Plan as a proposed amenity, or to include a dog park in Section K of the Master Plan “Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) & Priorities.” The PRMCC decided not to move the dog park to a “Priority” CIP project list, due to other priorities.

## Discussion

The PRMCC preferred site for a dog park was the Alhambra Avenue Detention Basin, north of John Muir Road. Generally, a dog park is a closed area to allow dogs to run and play off leash. The park would include features such as: off street parking, walkway to entrance, signage with use rules, double access gates and fencing, combined play areas for large and small breeds, canine play/agility equipment, seating benches, watering station for dogs and owners, litter pick up station, trash cans, and basic landscaping and irrigation, including shade trees or shade structure.

## Existing Improvements

The proposed site is currently an upper portion of the Alhambra Avenue Detention Basin located between Alhambra Avenue and Pleasant Hill Road East, north of John Muir Road. It is foreseeable the facility could flood in extreme rainy conditions. The improvements should be designed to withstand occasional heavy rains.

## Maintenance Needs

Through interviews with staff of nearby dog parks, it has been determined a high level of maintenance effort is required to maintain a dog park. Parks are normally closed one day a week for maintenance, and one month per year. In addition, dog waste will need to be picked up more than once per week, depending on the use of the park. Although most dog parks have signs and bag dispensers, all parks visited showed evidence that some owners do not pick up after their dogs.

## Proposed Improvements

The following information was compiled from American Kennel Club (AKC) publications

- A. Dog Park: The Alhambra Avenue Dog Park site is approximately 0.75 acres. This area will only accommodate a single park that serves both small and large dogs. The “ideal” area for a dog park is one acre (AKC). Although it is preferable that a separate small dog area is available, it was observed that many small dog owners used the large dog area at many parks. Furthermore, some existing parks do not have separate areas for small and large dogs. AKC recommends the following features and amenities:
  - Fencing the site with a four to six -foot high, chain link fence
  - A double gated entry
  - Canine play/agility equipment
  - Water for both dogs and owners ADA access
  - Signs specifying park hours and rules
  - Grassy area mowed routinely. However, it was observed that grass in most parks was difficult to maintain and was often worn away. An alternate surfacing such as pea gravel or mulch should be evaluated.
  - Adequate drainage

- B. Site Furnishing:
  - Covered trash cans
  - Waste bags
  - Pooper scooper stations
  - Tables and benches
  - Shade for both dogs and owners
  
- C. Parking:
  - ADA parking adjacent to park (2 stalls)
  - Nearby gravel parking lot (10 stalls min.)
  - Pathway from parking to park
  
- D. Off-site Improvements:
  - Concrete driveway apron
  - Asphalt driveway (24' width)
  - Sidewalk along Alhambra Avenue
  - Acceleration/deceleration lanes on Alhambra Avenue
  - Pedestrian bridge from Pleasant Hill Road East

#### Next Step

Recently, a contingent of residents has attended Council meetings expressing a desire for a downtown dog park. This topic was on the October 20, 2015 PRMCC agenda. After hearing comments from residents, the PRMCC took action to refer the issue back to the Dog Park Subcommittee. The Subcommittee will convene over the next two to three weeks to set a date and format for a public workshop. It is anticipated the workshop will take place in December, in part to accommodate the schedule of the interested public and the Thanksgiving holiday. One area of focus is the John Muir Amphitheater overflow parking area as a potential park site. The area is located just north of the Sea Scouts facility on North Court Street. The outcome of the workshop, and any further recommendations by the PRMCC, will be brought back to Council at a future meeting.

#### **Fiscal Impact**

There is no funding to pay for the design, construction, or future maintenance of a dog park. While the proponents of a dog park in the City have indicated they are willing to consider raising private funds for a park to date staff is unaware of any formal effort by this group to raise funds. Also, there will need to be some additional analysis of what if any organized dog park supporter group might do to help cover the cost or provide actual volunteer hours to support maintenance and operation of a dog park.

A potential funding source is the Memorial Gift and Donation Program. However, it is unknown at this time if such funding would come through. Private donations may also be garnered to pay for fencing, trees, irrigation, base materials and other expenses.

The design, construction and project administration costs for dog parks are approximately \$250,000 to \$500,000, depending on the site selected, park amenities and improvements. A more detailed budget will be presented to Council once a recommended site has been determined.

As mentioned above, other cities' staff has indicated dog parks require significantly higher levels of maintenance than most parks. For routine maintenance, it is estimated a two-worker crew will spend six hours per week, eleven months a year, totaling 576 work hours. More intensive site rehabilitation is required once a year.

This effort would include minor re-grading, sod, seeding or other surface material replenishing, fence and irrigation repair, etc. The work is estimated to take another 160 total maintenance hours. The site will also have material and utility costs associated with maintenance and operation, estimated at \$20,000 per year.

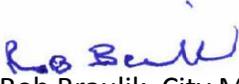
Current maintenance requirements for all the rehabilitated parks from Measure H have placed great operations burdens on existing staff to maintain existing park infrastructure. The usage of existing parks has gone up exponentially due to the upgraded quality of the parks and new facilities and amenities. Additional analysis will need to be done to evaluate options to deal with the potential maintenance requirements a dog park would require if implemented. At a minimum, the estimated annual recurring cost of a dog park (subject to further review analysis) is found below:

**Annual Maintenance cost summary:**

Routine Maintenance staff cost	\$20,160
Annual restoration Maintenance staff costs	\$ 5,600
Material and utilities	<u>\$20,000</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$45,760</b>

**Attachment**

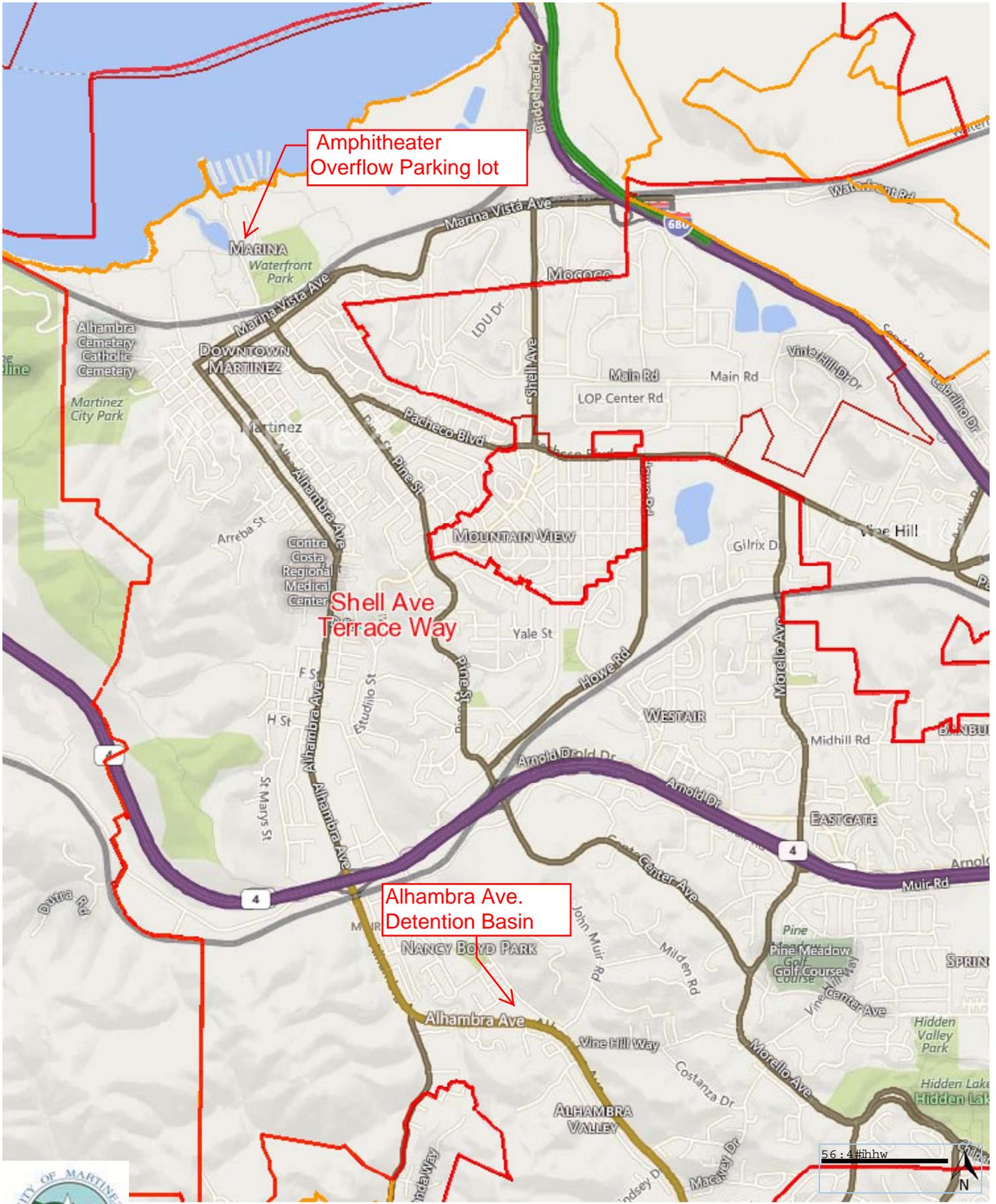
- Vicinity Map

APPROVED BY:   
Rob Braulik, City Manager

Amphitheater  
Overflow Parking lot

Alhambra Ave.  
Detention Basin

Shell Ave  
Terrace Way



**Dog Park Location Map**

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