

RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSION

AGENDA 1/13/2022

Item 6-B Public Written Comment #2

From East End Dog Park Community Organization

January 10, 2022

TO: Recreation and Parks Commission

RE: Location of new dog park serving East End and Bay Farm

East End Dog Park (EEDP) is a community organization representing nearly 500 dog owners who are residents of the City of Alameda that strongly support the need for a local dog park.

To help present a unified sense of this group's needs regarding a dog park, we conducted a survey of our members. A total of 107 responded, representing around 20% of our full group. Our hope is that these data will not only provide continued evidence of a large and passionate group of advocates for this project, but also supply more granular and focused information about the wants of this diverse group so as to move this project forward effectively.

A growing issue

Per John Lipp, CEO of FAAS: "The state estimates the dog population of a city is the human population divided by 4. Using that formula, Alameda (human population of 77,624) is estimated to be home to 19,406 pet dogs." The COVID-19 pandemic has also resulted in a number of "pandemic puppies" being added to homes across the country, including Alameda. This rising density is contributing to increased pressure for an appropriate outlet more convenient to these many owners. At present, there is a single dog park to serve them all (excluding the Main Street Ferry space, which does not have shade or water, requires driving, and we believe is not formally recognized as a dog park by the City itself). In addition, this single dog park (Washington) is not centrally located to the population distribution in Alameda, particularly for residents of Bay Farm.

As a group, we acknowledge that off-leash incidents are problematic, and the rising number of them speaks to the increasing need for a dedicated off-leash space. In fact, many of the comments from community members voiced at past Commission meetings stating that they are opposed to a new dog park seemed, in fact, to make the case for one, namely that off-leash dogs can endanger other citizens. The prospect of using APD to increase enforcement of leash laws has also been strongly called into question by the EEDP group given the many other more serious problems in the city (increased rate of theft including catalytic converter, robbery, shootings, reckless speeding, and unsheltered people).

Unsurprisingly, EEDP members are in favor of the locations closest to them.

94501 residents (62% of total respondents) strongly prefer Krusi and Towata, while 94502 residents (38% of total respondents) strongly prefer Leydecker and Bay Farm Waterfront. Much of this is driven by the desire to be able to walk as opposed to drive, particularly among residents

of 94501 (walkability rated as extremely or very important for 79% of 94501 residents vs. 41% of 94502 residents). General proximity, size of park, parking, and amenities were secondary factors.

On a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being preferred location and 4 being least preferred location:

Towata Park							
	1	2	3	4	TOTAL	SCORE	
Q1: 94501	17.19% 11	53.13% 34	15.63% 10	14.06% 9	64.00% 64	2.73	
Q1: 94502	2.78% 1	13.89% 5	55.56% 20	27.78% 10	36.00% 36	1.92	
Krusi Park							
	1	2	3	4	TOTAL	SCORE	
Q1: 94501	68.75% 44	12.50% 8	10.94% 7	7.81% 5	64.00% 64	3.42	
Q1: 94502	8.33% 3	8.33% 3	27.78% 10	55.56% 20	36.00% 36	1.69	
Leydecker Park							
	1	2	3	4	TOTAL	SCORE	
Q1: 94501	3.13% 2	21.88% 14	50.00% 32	25.00% 16	64.00% 64	2.03	
Q1: 94502	38.89% 14	47.22% 17	5.56% 2	8.33% 3	36.00% 36	3.17	
Bay Farm Waterfront							
	1	2	3	4	TOTAL	SCORE	
Q1: 94501	10.94% 7	12.50% 8	23.44% 15	53.13% 34	64.00% 64	1.81	
Q1: 94502	50.00% 18	30.56% 11	11.11% 4	8.33% 3	36.00% 36	3.22	

Response to the newly proposed location at Bay Farm Waterfront

This new location, while wonderful in many ways (especially in that it's waterfront, not near residential homes, seems to have plenty of parking, etc), will only satisfy a subset of our population, particularly those in 94502, for whom this location is much more proximal. Only 18% of 94501 residents said this location would meet their needs extremely or very well, compared to 71% of 94502 residents.

This is largely because it is quite inconvenient (and certainly not walkable) for people in East End and much of Bay Farm. In fact, Washington Park is closer to much of the East End than this new location ("Defeats the entire purpose of proposed 'East Alameda dog park' if new park is actually farther away from East Alameda than the currently used Alameda Dog Park").

Half of 94501 respondents feel the Bay Farm Waterfront location does not serve their needs at all because of the distant location (“it might as well be in San Leandro”), and thus are unlikely to change their behaviors (e.g. off-leash in parks) as a result. Conversely, if a convenient park were to be created, nearly all respondents who currently report running their dogs off-leash in Alameda parks (78% of respondents) also report that they are likely to reduce their off-leash behavior.

Among residents of 94502, preference for Leydecker and Bay Farm Waterfront was nearly equivalent (3.17 vs. 3.22 average rating respectively). Given these results and public comment, there remains strong interest in Leydecker, primarily given its central location and existing parking. We recognize the concerns presented by the Harbor Bay HOA, but note that there are dues-paying members of this HOA who do support a dog park at Leydecker, there is quite a lot of parking in the shopping area in general, and there is evidence that dog parks actually [increase property value](#). In many communities, a dog park is listed as an amenity. The Waterfront location has the benefit of not having immediate neighbors, which does alleviate some of the potential issues voiced by the HOA. When presented with the new Waterfront option, 71% of 94502 respondents reported that this location would work extremely or very well for them.

Some respondents noted that the fact that this location requires drivability is counterintuitive to the City of Alameda’s 2040 vision: “This city has made many decisions to make this city more walkable and bikeable. Putting a dog park on far end of our city making it walkable to no one (or very few) seems very backwards.” It was also suggested that speeds on Harbor Bay Parkway would need to be reduced near this new location to increase safety.

Recommendation

The data from the EEDP survey **strongly supports the need for 2 dog parks**: one on Bay Farm, with the new Waterfront location being preferred (followed closely by Leydecker), and the other on the East End, with Krusi being preferred (followed by Towata, and perhaps Osborne if the Commission is open to reconsidering it – we recognize the drawbacks to the Osborne location, but since several members suggested reconsidering it given its size, existing fencing, and central location to the greater area of need, we thought worth mentioning).

Should the new Bay Farm Waterfront location end up being the overall preferred location by the Commission given the many factors at play, we urge the Commission to consider prioritizing at least one other location more central to the greater area of need, including the residents of the East End.

Respondents from 94501, the area that would be most neglected by the Bay Farm Waterfront location, prefer Krusi over Towata (rating of 1.56 vs. 1.91 respectively).

It was also noted that because all the park options are small in size, given the space restrictions in Alameda, having multiple parks would reduce the likelihood of overcrowding that can be both unpleasant and potentially dangerous.

To this end, the majority of our respondents (83%) are willing to contribute money (65%), time (29%), physical effort (35%), or a combination thereof in order to make multiple parks possible. Notably, a greater proportion and total number of people who are willing to contribute are located in 94501.

Full survey results can be found here:

[Aggregate results](#)

[Separated by Zip code](#)

Thank you for your consideration and dedication to this strongly-supported community need.

Sarah Larcker & Jeff Cambra

East End Dog Park Leadership Team

Direct community feedback via survey and EastEndDogPark.com

Selection of responses from the community to Bay Farm Waterfront Location

From 94502

Lots of open land and parking

The park is not very big.

Close to home and by the water

It's a good size and relatively easy to access. Potential water access is a bonus as well

I can walk to it with my dog!

It's pretty there and convenient location

I like to walk the dog along the shore. It's only a mile from home

It is too far removed from the East End residents and frankly remote to even Bayfarm/Harbor Bay residents. A better location to consider for BF/HBI would be Godfrey Park, and an apportioned area at Lincoln Park for the East End on the main island.

I feel size is more important than location. All options are fairly small which may lead to severe behavioral issues if the park is overcrowded (much like what happens at Crown Beach). Suggest using the area on the North side of the restrooms. It is dirt so easier upkeep, much larger lot, and this way people can still picnic on the grass area. The current area is heavily used by families to picnic and play.

Walkable from almost anywhere on Bay Farm.

Close and plenty of room

Location is okay. More limited parking as ferry patrons park in the lot. No other activities for families and would be solely for dog park

I would like to change my rating I looked at the map more closely and it is a very small parcel I thought it was the undeveloped parcel next to it that little triangle area is not large enough for dogs to run

Scenic and easy parking.

We can't walk there, but the location is well suited with ease of parking, no traffic hassles and rest rooms are available.

As a disabled person, I don't like to take meds and drive. I also need to take my pain meds. This location would be a walk I couldn't do often. Also less sheltered from wind/elements. Unless there is water access, not a great spot.

Bayfront, as well as the other locations, is not really sufficient in size.

I live on Bay Farm and am in walking distance to this park. But I am concerned with what will happen related to ferry parking for those who need it, additional traffic on the trails, etc.

Bay farm needs a dog park. The main island already has 2!! Those that live near krusi park would have 2 good options as the one by crown isn't too far away and neither is bay farm but for bay farm not to have 1 park is unfair.

It is a short walk from our home and we often walk to this location often

Is the new location good? I'd say ultimately yes. My only concern is the parking situation as it will be only street parking and virtually everyone who goes will need to drive and park.

From 94501

It should be more centrally located for Alamedans and Bay Farmers. What is the point of having a dog park this far out from everyone? Dogs need exercise more than once a week and the distance to this area makes this a once a week location. For that, I'll just got to the West End park and never visit this one

Longer way from east end and most homes

Long way away just like west end park

It's the furthest away from me, I likely won't visit on a regular basis

Nice scenery and bigger park.

This city has made many decisions to make this city more walkable and bikable. Putting a dog park on far end of our city making it walkable to no one (or very few) seems very backwards.

Honestly, this is so far off the mark that it makes me question the decision making of our city officials. Nothing about this makes sense except that it is the least "NIMBY" of all of the options.

It's basically the middle of nowhere Alameda. I voted for an East End dog park not a Bay Farm one.

Driving across island each time.

I'd have to drive to it, same as driving to Washington park

Location. Defeats the entire purpose of proposed "East Alameda dog park" if new park is actually farther away from East Alameda than the currently used Alameda Dog Park

First of all the Parking is very limited especially when the ferry is in service. Street parking is also Minimal. Very remote and theft is high for car break ins because it's remote Also it's too far to walk and no restrooms or water fountains

it's a drive, so for us it's no more useful than Washington park.

It's out of the way, becomes a destination rather than a stop

Doesn't make sense at all. I am not interested in driving to Bay Farm for a dog park and would rather use the local fields (Lincoln/Krusi).

It's the best location. It's not as close to my home as I would like, but a small dog park like the one suggested at Krusi would not be a good fit for my dog. In my 9 years of experience at the Washington dog park (big dog side), in order for a dog park to be successful, it must provide enough space for dogs to be able to run freely. Also, if a couple of dogs do not get along, a bigger space allows dogs to not have to interact.

Easy to drive to this location, it's scenic and there is parking.

Terrible choice, way way way too far. I can't even believe this is under consideration for an East End park.

I may as well get in the car and go to the west end.

I like to walk with my dog to the park and this is too far.

Nice place to take the dog for a walk- but would need to drive there

Too far. Doesn't remotely meet the need of a community centered park for those on the East End.

This location is the furthest from where I (and many other local meetups' dog owners) live, so I would have to reserve visits to the weekend and my dog would not get the benefits of more regular exercise and socialization.

Way too far. Could drive to Washington park in less time. This is a terrible solution.

Way way way too far away from the East End area that needs it the most. This part will get minimal usage and would be a terrible idea UNLESS it is done as an addition to a true East End park.

What's not to love. this is california and it's on the waterfront with views. great outdoors location for humans and doggies!

Too far from home. I will likely never use this park.

I'd have to drive there which is why I don't go to the other dog parks on Alameda already.

This project originated with the hopes of establishing an EAST END dog park. This new proposed location is no where near all of the residents in the EAST END hoping for an EAST END dog park.

It would require a drive and is even further from our house than the existing Washington dog park. While it would be nice to have some water access (maybe that's possible here?) it's not convenient to almost anyone, even those on Bay Farm, and so I don't think it would have much of an impact on off-leash behaviors or needs.

Additional comments from survey in our “anything else you want us to know” section

Some other sites that are underutilized (Osborne, for example) should be reconsidered. Very little infrastructure improvements would be needed and the money saved and funds raised could be used to provide portable drinking fountains, restrooms, etc. as is done in other cities for the short term and if proven to be successful sites, permanent facilities can be added in years to follow with additional City funding and/or community fundraising. Select a site people and their dogs WANT to use and gather and then build upon the NEEDS for that site (s) over time.

Not all dogs belong in dog parks. If nobody is using the school's lawns, then I find nothing wrong with people using the space for their dogs. We all pay taxes for the schools, we deserve to use them.

Reading through the community comments that the Parks department sent, it is really clear that there is a huge need for dog friendly parks on the east end and bay farm. While everyone will ultimately be happy that we get a new dog park, some individuals suggested specific offleash hours at general parks. Prior to living in alameda, I was on the peninsula and many parks had this policy. It gave dog owners more flexibility and set a window of time so the community was aware of when offleash dogs would be present. This would cost virtually nothing but would alleviate a lot of the pain points felt by East Enders when it comes to getting their dog out and socialized. I think this is an idea worth considering on top of whatever location is chosen for the dog park.

Leydecker is one of the largest locations which is already a huge win. It already has many amenities in place making it [presumably] cheaper. It is in the middle of several neighborhoods making it very walkable. For those that need or want to drive, it has the most parking, by far, compared to any other locations proposed.

Please reconsider size. I realize space is and locations are limited but safety is so important. Small parks are not safe if overcrowded.

I'd really, really like a dog park on Bay Farm that is clean and well maintained.

Yes, please look at Bill Osborne Model Airplane Field as a choice.

Don't put this park at leydecker. The baseball field is used for kids and adult organizations. Balls will be flying into the dog park. This is very unsafe. People and dogs will be hit. A huge liability for the city.

Would love to have a dog park closer to east end. It is currently inconvenient to go to the current small dog park.

I did not realize that the lot in question off of Harbor Bay was that tiny little triangle lot I thought it was the undeveloped weed covered lot next to it. Cars drive very fast along Harbor Bay there at times and if a ball bounces over a fence I know my dog would easily jump the fence to chase the ball so don't think I would use that park at all unless it was much larger than the Little Triangle patch

Thank you 🙏 For waterfront park, speed limit would have to be reduced
Two extra dog parks would be worth it. There are a lot of dogs within Alameda and they all need a place to run free and play. It would also be important that each have different areas for large and small dogs.

Thank you for listening to the needs of the dog owners!

Responses from the community on EastEndDogPark.com

I am sure the obvious has been pointed out already that 94501 is geographically much bigger than 94502 and already has 2 dog parks. Putting a 3rd at Krusi doesn't seem equitable. I am 100% in favor of the waterfront park on Bay Farm. And if proximity to it vs. Lydecker is an issue? Come on. Bay Farm has a 5 mile circumference. Put your walking shoes on people. Your dog will love it no matter where you live on Bay Farm. It is a nice walk. Thank you for all your hard work...

- Lisa Lundquist, 507 Centre Ct, Alameda

As an East End resident, I am hoping to be within a short walking distance to a fenced-in dog park so my pup and I can go for a quick visit before work. Krusi Park is ideal, tucked in the neighborhood with no major streets to cross and no need to jump into a car. Having more space (particularly if there's water access) on Bay Farm would be nice, but its being further away would probably mean leaving visits to the weekend and sticking with Lincoln Park during the week. I appreciate how thoughtful this whole process has been – thank you!

- Valerie

If the only goal is within walking distance people should have made that more clear in the original survey. I have no problem driving we do that now already. I like the idea of OPEN SPACE away from the city noise. Harbor Bay is a great idea.

Thank you

- J. Moran

Newly proposed area is so far away from East End as to be not beneficial as an East End dog park at all. Would just continue going to bigger and closer dog area in Washington park if this is the choice.

- Charles

Has anyone thought of the space adjacent to the Pet Food Express and Starbucks where the old Fruitvale Bridge train tracks use to be located next to Fruitvale Ave.? That site has been sitting vacant for decades and has no other real use.

There are preexisting fences already there (some of which would need repair to get them tall enough for bigger dogs who might be able to jump them), and, not to mention... a pet food store, Starbucks, ample parking, and other amenities dog owners could patronize while there... all while being far enough away from local homes as to not cause a noise disturbance. In addition, this location is extremely walkable from a lot of areas on the East End of Alameda. It would not cost too much to have water moved to that location as there are existing water lines from the shops on site, not to mention the added benefits to the local stores/businesses from pet owners who would also frequent those locations while there with their pets. I am sure the landlord/business owners would love the added foot traffic (i.e. revenue), so it should not take much to convince the landlord/business owners to jump on board.

- Ian Mason

I agree with most of the comments here; Bay Farm location is not walkable to most East end residence. Krusi park makes much more sense for an East end dog park.

- A.M-L

We live on Bayfarm and would enjoy the Bayfarm waterfront location. Would it be mixed use, large and small dogs? I would be concerned since our dog is small. Most likely we would only use the dog park if a section was allocated as small dog space. Thank you so much for the really excellent process you are following to figure out the best use of the funds.

- Carol Graham

As an East End resident, a dog park within walking distance would be nice, but unless the dog park space is large, I wouldn't be using it anyhow. This is why I think Krusi is not a great choice. Maybe for a little dog park, but not for large dogs. I like the Bay Farm option. It's a little hard to tell exactly how large this space would be. Would dogs have access to the bay? (meaning – would they officially be allowed to go into the bay there?) The bigger the space, the safer for all the dogs. Thank you for all your work on this.

- Anne Rogers

Thank you for all your hard work. I think Krusi Park is the most accessible location for East Enders. I also think Bay Farm should have its own dog park and the location near the ferry seems great to me. The Towata Park location seems problematic in terms of high traffic, fast cars, less walkable and potentially dangerous to get to.

- Mary McFarland

Hello – I am greatly appreciative of this effort but somehow I feel there's something missing such as considering size of space. All spaces suggested have been extremely small. Small dog parks can lead to challenges if too many dogs are there at the same time. I would love for the board to reconsider examining Harrington Park as an option as well.

- Debbie

While I appreciate all of the due diligence that is going into this process, the new location on Bay Farm only works if we're doing two dog parks. I can't see most East End respondents (the majority of people advocating for a dog park) driving to the Harbor Bay Ferry area on a regular basis. I think a dog park should be walking distance to a community who can enjoy it, which is why the Krusi location is preferred in my opinion (perhaps in combination with another location on Bay Farm). Yes, there are drawbacks to that location, but weighted against the most important factors (i.e. usage!), I think it is the clear winner. Thanks again for all of the effort and I look forward to continued investment in facilities for dogs to enjoy on the East End.

- David

I think Krusi park would be the most accessible for everyone on the East End of Alameda to access. It feels like the most convenient location to encourage walking to the dog park in the East End. Parking is still available around Otis Elementary too.

- Darryl Hua

We need a dog park closer to this end of the island for our pets! My dog gets carsick easily and shakes with anxiety when we take her to the dog park on the other end of the island! She loves the dog park but hates the ride to and from!

- Kim Woo