

Agenda Report

THROUGH: PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE **DATE:** AUGUST 2, 1999
TO: CITY COUNCIL **DATE:** AUGUST 9, 1999
FROM: CYNTHIA J. KURTZ, CITY MANAGER
SUBJECT: DOGS OFF-LEASH IN CITY DESIGNATED PARKS

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council direct the City Attorney to prepare an amendment to Section 6.12.010 of the Pasadena Municipal Code that will prohibit dogs off-leash in City of Pasadena, except during exhibitions or bench shows for which appropriate city licenses and permits have been previously obtained and city-permitted or authorized dog obedience training program.

BACKGROUND

Currently, the City has in place Section 6.12.010 of the Pasadena Municipal Code, which requires dogs to be secured by a leash in public places. An exception clause allows dogs to be off-leash under certain conditions and in certain areas. Explicitly, Section 6.12.010 states:

“No person owning, having an interest in, harboring or having charge, care, control, custody or possession of any dog shall cause or permit such dog to be in or upon any public street, alley or other public place or in or upon any unenclosed lot or premises, unless such dog is securely confined by a strong cord, chain or leash, not exceeding 6 feet, securely and continuously held by a competent person owning, having an interest in, harboring or having charge, care, control, custody or possession of such dog, or unless such dog is confined within an automobile. **This section shall not apply to any dog performing during a city-permitted exhibition or bench show, or during obedience training when such training is conducted by an owner at times and in areas designated by the recreation department.**”

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Dogs Off Leash in City Designated Parks

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In 1991, the Recreation and Parks Commission recommended to the City Council that Brookside Park, Victory Park and Central Park be designated for off-leash dog obedience training.

Changes to the ordinance are recommended in order to reduce public nuisance to citizens and to improve ease of enforcement. Officials with the Pasadena Humane Society have found the ordinance difficult to enforce in City parks. During the past several months, the Pasadena Humane Society issued six citations to dog owners for allowing their dogs to run loose in Victory Park. In three of the six cases, the court found no evidence that the owners were not training their dogs at Victory Park, but did find there was enough evidence that the owners were allowing their dogs to run loose on the grounds of Pasadena High School. The defendants were fined for allowing their dogs off-leash at Pasadena High School. The remaining three cases were dismissed after the court allowed the defendants to settle by paying all court costs. It has also been reported that certain kinds of vicious dogs were found off-leash and joggers were chased by off-leash dogs in City parks.

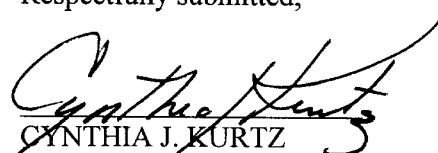
The City Council, at its May 17, 1999 meeting, approved, in concept, an off-leash dog exercise area in Eaton Wash Park. Dog owners who allow their dogs off-leash in designated parks would be able to use Eaton Wash Park for exercising or training purposes once the Eaton Wash Park development is completed and available.

The staff recommends that the City Council authorize amendment of Section 6.12.010 of the Pasadena Municipal Code to no longer allow an individual to train a dog off-leash in any city designated park. The change in the ordinance will only allow dogs off-leash in city parks in permitted bench shows, dog exhibitions, and city-permitted dog obedience training program.

FISCAL IMPACT:

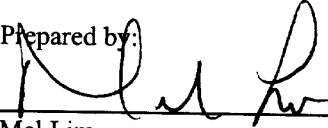
There is no fiscal impact as the result of this recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,


CYNTHIA J. KURTZ
City Manager


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Prepared by:



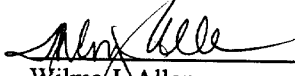
Mel Lim
Environmental Health Division

Reviewed by:



Bob Baderian
Director of Parks and Natural Resources

Approved by:



Wilma J. Allen
Acting Director of Public Health