Potential Off Leash Park Opportunities

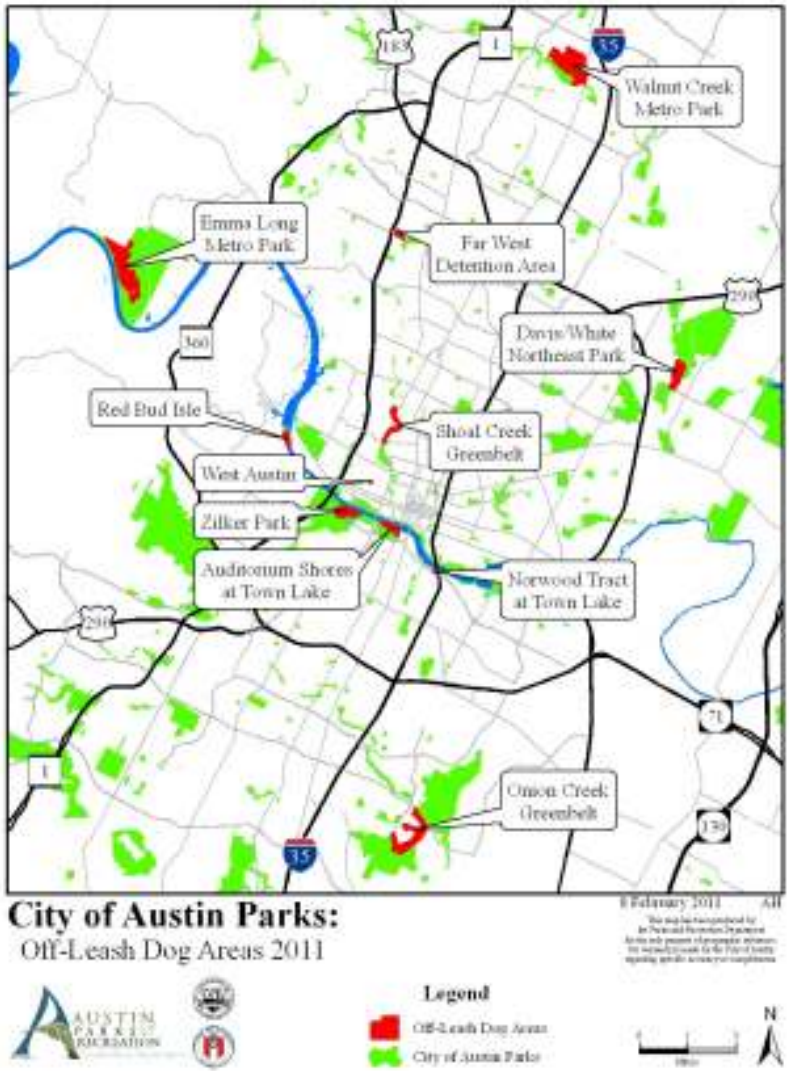
Austin Parks and Recreation Department

July 26, 2011

PARD Long Range Plan

- To develop off leash areas that are evenly distributed throughout the city;
- In partnership with the Off Leash Area Advisory Committee (OLAAC) developed criteria for future selection of Off Leash Areas within the park system.

11 Existing OLAs



- Walnut Creek Metropolitan Park
- Emma Long Metropolitan Park
- Far West Detention Area
- Red Bud Isle
- Davis/White Northeast District Park
- Portion of Shoal Creek Greenbelt
- West Austin Neighborhood Park
- Zilker Metropolitan Park
- Auditorium Shores at Lady Bird Lake Metropolitan Park
- Norwood Tract at Lady Bird Lake Metropolitan Park
- Portion of Onion Creek Greenbelt

Community Meetings

- PARD held two Community Outreach Meetings;
- Yett Creek Park and Mabel Davis Park;

COA Staff and Volunteers

- Parks and Recreation Planning Staff
- Watershed Environmental Resources Management
- Public Works Neighborhood Connectivity
- Off Leash Area Advisory Committee

Meeting Guidelines and Goals

The purpose of this public meeting is to gather feedback from the community through an open forum of discussion on two proposed sites for an off leash area.

Criteria for future site selection of Off Leash Areas

- **Sufficient distance from residential properties;**
- **50 to 300 feet from springs, or other critical environmental features;**
- **Sufficient acreage for support facilities: parking, maintenance area; etc..**
- **Design should:**
  - Be clearly marked and well signed;
  - Be equipped with mutt mitts, trash receptacles;
  - Have available parking;
  - Avoid accelerated erosion;
  - Encourage movement of people and dogs;
  - Comply with all City of Austin Codes;

Why Yett Creek Park

Yett Creek Neighborhood Park

11 May 2011 AH

AUSTIN PARKS & RECREATION
Cultural Places, Natural Spaces

Northwest District
12538 Riata Vista Cir.

Legend

- Benches
- Authorized Trailhead
- Unauthorized Trailhead
- Authorized Trails
- Unauthorized Trails
- Creeks and Drainage
- Other City of Austin Parks
- Yett Creek Park

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AUSTIN PARKS & RECREATION

Yett Creek Park

- PARD purchased the 40 acres park in 1989;
- Yett Creek Park is located in NW Austin, just west of MoPac south of Parmer Lane;
- Park has a 1 mile nature trail;

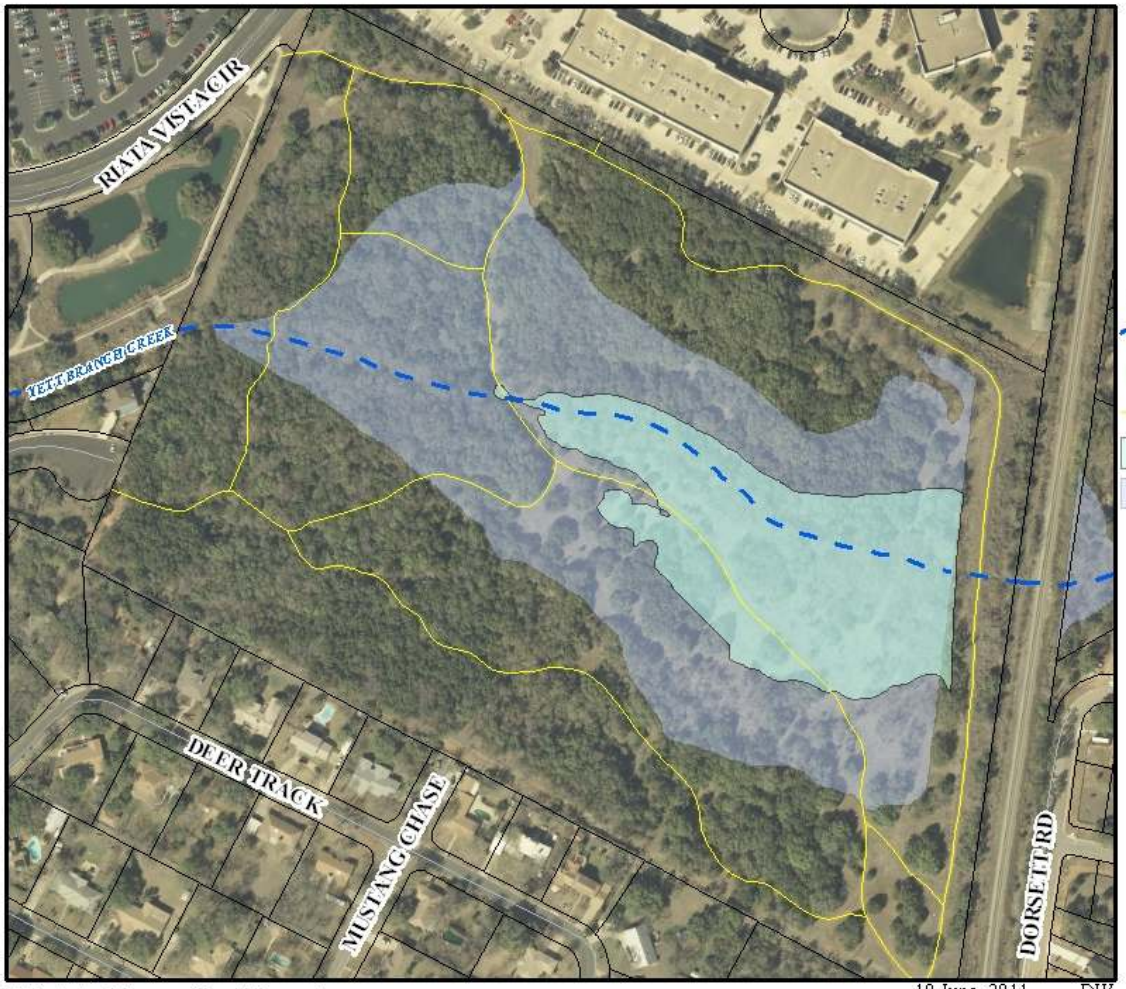
Why Yett Creek Park for an Off Leash Area

- No Off Leash Areas exist within the NW sector of the city;
- Compatibility with adjacent land uses;
- No significant environmental sensitive features;
- Parkland that has low usage;
- Parkland meets the criteria for sustainable off leash parks
- Nearest Off Leash Area is more than 5 miles away;
- Park has limited future recreational uses due to its function as a regional detention

Guidelines for a Sustainable Off-Leash Area

- **Sufficient distance from residential properties;**
- **50 to 300 feet from springs, or other critical environmental features;**
- **Design should:**
  - Be clearly marked and well signed;
  - Be equipped with mutt mitts, trash receptacles;
  - Have available parking;
  - Avoid accelerated erosion;
  - Encourage movement of people and dogs;
  - Comply with all City of Austin Codes;

Regional Detention/Flood Plain



Legend

- TCAD Parcels
- Creeks and Drainage
- City of Austin Parks
- Park trails
- Regional Ponds
- 100 year flood plain

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10 June 2011 DW

Yett Creek Park: Regional Detention/Flood Plain

Concerns expressed at the public meeting

- What Public Infrastructure will be considered? (ie… restrooms, parking facilities, drinking fountains, seating)
- How far will the off leash trail be from people's backyards? Will there be fencing?
- What impacts will the use have on the existing wildlife?
- Will people be parking on the residential streets in the neighborhood?
- Where would be the entrances to the park be?
- Wanting the park to stay as is.

Group Exercise

- At the June 13, 2011 meeting, Staff conducted a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats Exercise with the stakeholders.
- Well attended meeting; over 120 people
- Results of the exercise are in your back-up

Mabel Davis District Park

- 50.03 acres purchased in 1974
- Developed and opened in 1979
- Named after Mrs. Alden (Mabel) Davis
  - Helped organize the Austin Area Garden Center
  - Served as the Center's first President
- A section of the park is located over an old landfill that operated from 1944-1955
- Park was closed in May 2000 *(except for the pool)* for remediation of contaminants found in soils of undeveloped area of the park
- Landfill cap was added in response to remediation in 2005

Landfill & Cap Locations

PARD Long Range Plan (LRP) and East Riverside Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan Recommendations

- Long Range Plan – 2010:
  - Evenly distribute off-leash areas (OLAs) throughout the city
- East Riverside Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan *(for Mabel Davis District Park*
  - R94.10 Fenced dog park
    - ✔ Skate Park
    - ✔ Seating Area
    - ✔ Picnic tables
    - ✔ Restroom facilities

Mabel Davis District Park

11 April 2011 AH

South District
3427 Parker Ln.

Legend

- Municipal
- Playscapes
- Skateboard Area
- Basketball Courts
- Parking Lots
- Pool House
- Authorized Trail Access
- Unauthorized Trail Access
- Authorized Trails
- Unauthorized Trails
- Creeks and Drainage
- Other City of Austin Parks
- Mabel Davis

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Feet

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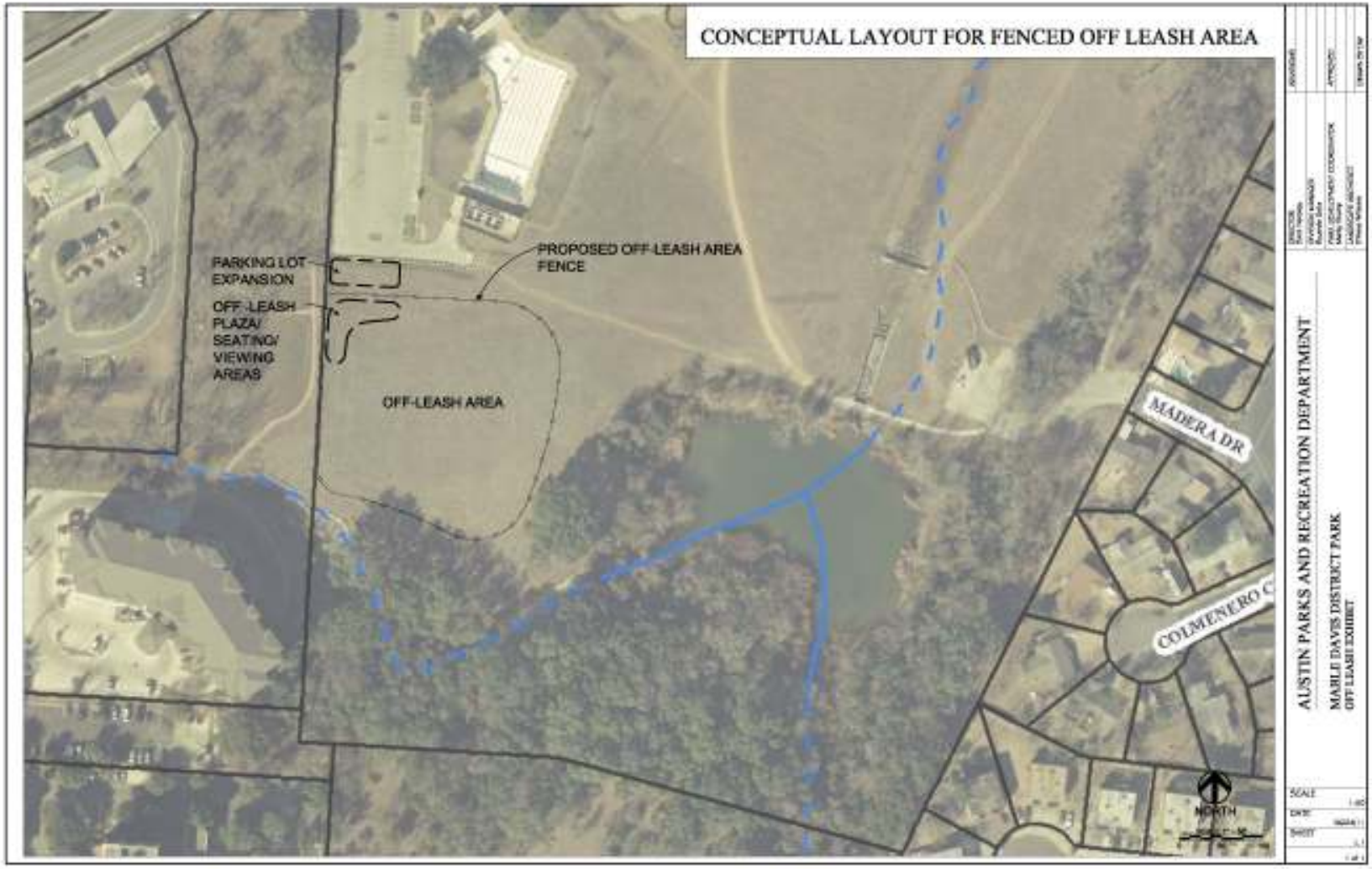
Why Mabel Davis District Park

- Compatibility with adjacent land uses
- Nearest OLAs:
  - Onion Creek Greenbelt – *the only OLA in the SE region of the city*
  - Norwood Tract at Lady Bird Lake
- Park has limited recreational uses due to capped former landfill

Conceptual Layout for Fenced Off-Leash Area



Concerns expressed at the community meeting

- Concerns that there are too many uses at Mabel Davis already (ie…pool, skatepark, playscape).
- Concerns about the capped pesticide and public health?
- Concerns about the aggressive dogs in the neigh. that will use the park.
- Concerns about the water quality of County Club Creek.
- Would like to see other uses like ballfields instead.
- Concerns about increase crime and safety in the park.

Wrap up and Next Steps

- June 17 - Email summary of comments to attendees
- July 11 – Land, Facilities and Programs Committee
- July 13 – Off Leash Area Advisory Committee
- July 26 – Parks Board
- August - Next Round of Community Meetings