



# Mabel Davis District Park and Yett Creek Neighborhood Park

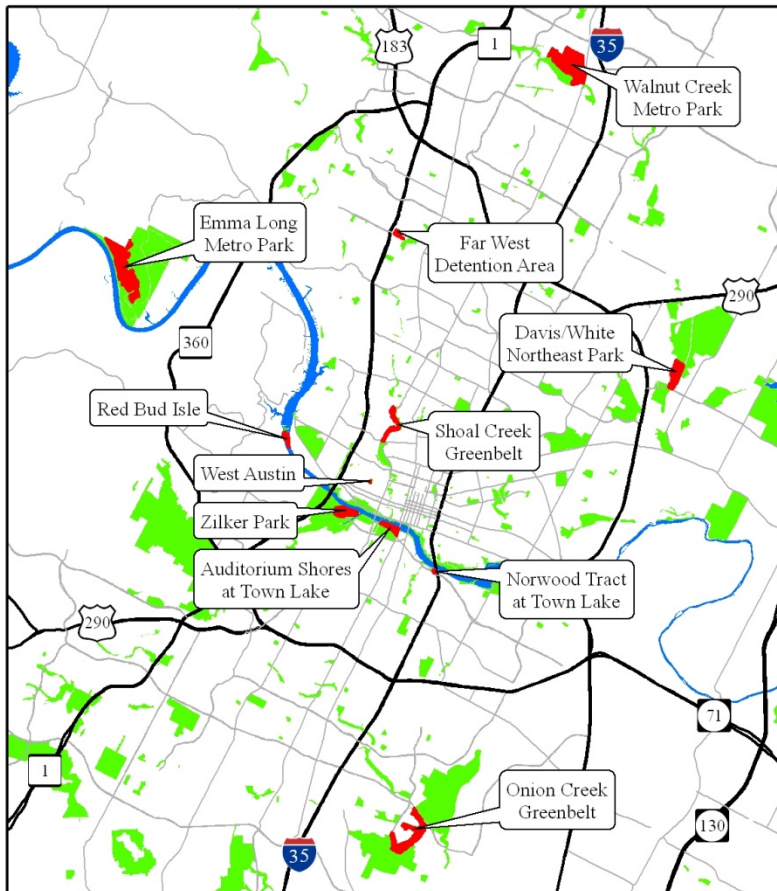
## Off-Leash Area Facility Proposal

Parks and Recreation Board  
February, 2011



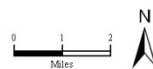
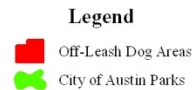


# Existing Off Leash Area Facilities



**City of Austin Parks:**  
Off-Leash Dog Areas 2011

8 February 2011 AH  
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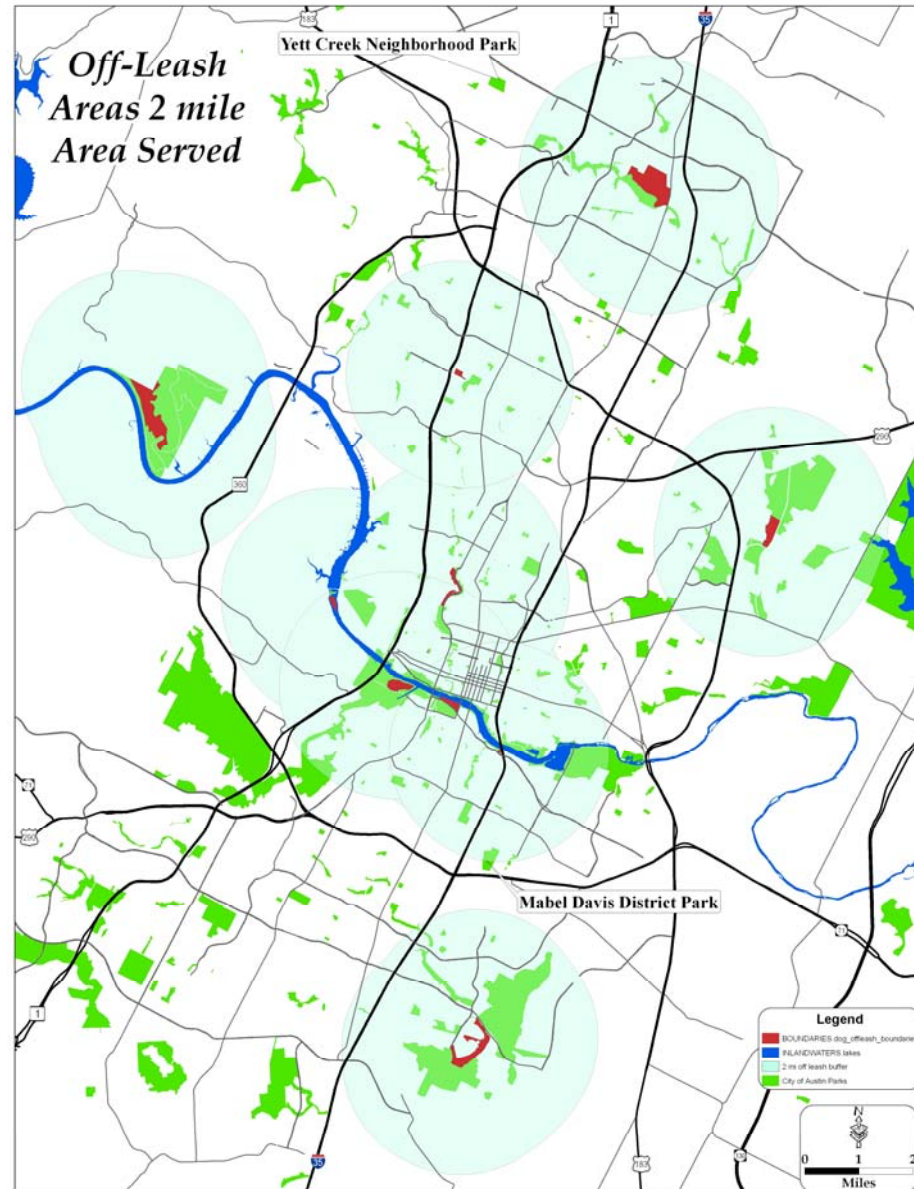
- Walnut Creek Metropolitan Park
- Emma Long Metropolitan Park
- Far West Detention Area
- Red Bud Isle
- Davis/White Northeast District Park
- Portion of Shoal Creek Greenbelt
- West Austin Neighborhood Park
- Zilker Metropolitan Park
- Auditorium Shores at Lady Bird Lake Metropolitan Park
- Norwood Tract at Lady Bird Lake Metropolitan Park
- Portion of Onion Creek Greenbelt

**Three Trails, Eight Off Leash Areas**



# New Facility Needs

- 2011 Humane Society Statistics show 39% of American households own 1 dog, 28% own 2 dogs, 12% own 3 or more dogs
- Off Leash amenities are an growing trend across the Country
- The Parks Department Long Range Plan 2010 proposes evenly distributed Off Leash Facilities throughout the City
- Austin currently has one facility per 74,000 residents. Statistically 29,000 of those owning one dog



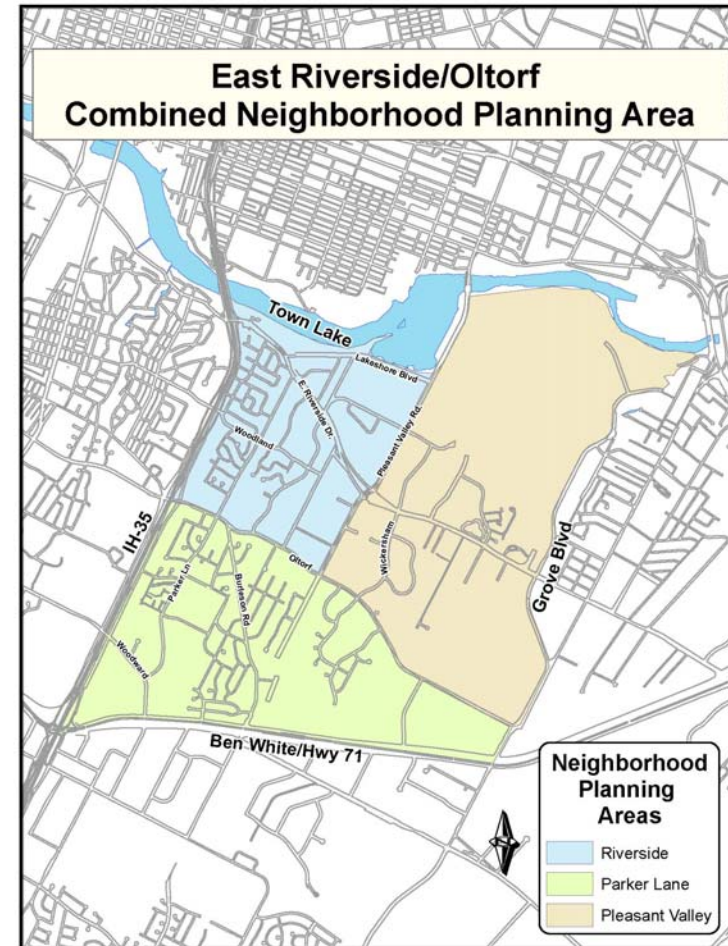


# PARD Long Range Plan (LRP) and East Riverside Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan Recommendations

## ■ East Riverside Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan

*(for Mabel Davis District Park) – 2006:*

- ❑ R94.10 Fenced dog park
- ✓ Skate Park
- ✓ Seating Area
- ✓ Picnic tables
- ✓ Restroom facilities





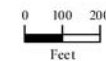


South District  
3427 Parker Ln.

#### 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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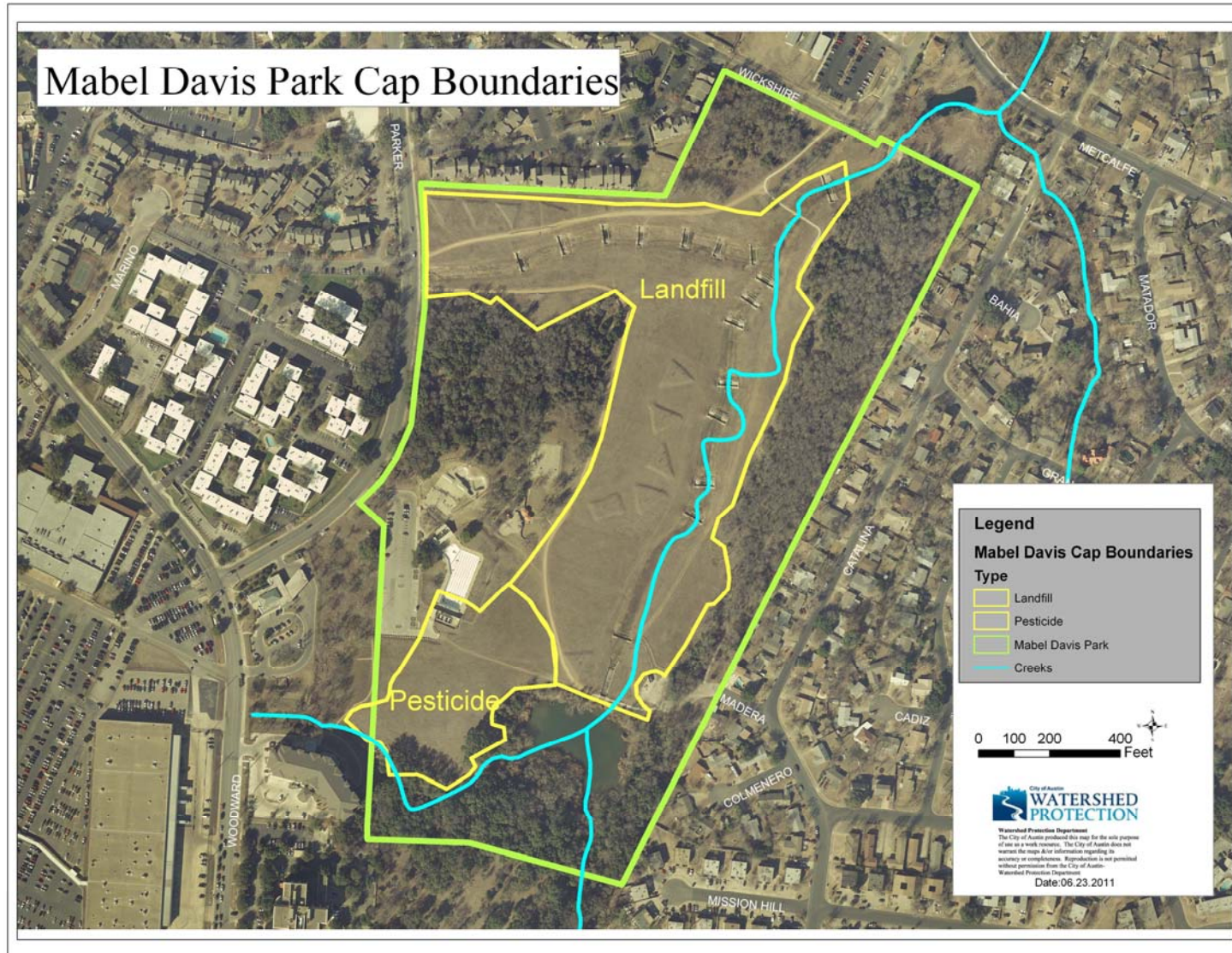


## Mabel Davis District Park

11 April 2011 AH



# Landfill & Cap Locations



# Public Process



## Mabel Davis

- June 27, 2011- Public Meeting #1
- July 11, 2011 – Land, Facilities and Programs Committee – Staff Briefing
- July 26, 2011 – Parks and Recreation Board – Staff Briefing
- November 7, 2011 – Public Meeting #2







# Public Meeting Comments Mabel Davis



- I believe it will have a negative impact on the environment
- A dog park will have an impact on nature and the peacefulness of the park
- I have 3 dogs that enjoy off leash parks, I support an off leash area at Mabel Davis
- The proposed off leash area is in a place I walk my dogs
- Who will keep the park clean?
- Has the decision been finalized?
- How much will it cost?
- Since the neighborhood is unable to control loose dogs, how will this be different?
- Restrooms
- Enforcement
- Smell - Will people using the pool smell the dog park?
- We completely support an off leash area at Mabel Davis
- Great opportunity to bring the community together and socialize our pets
- We enjoy the park as is
- The dog friendly nature that Austin offers is one of the reasons we moved here
- Although the dog park is in the neighborhood plan it was not high on the planning list
- I don't believe the park will be maintained
- Prefer the park be left as is

# Email Responses and Comments Mabel Davis

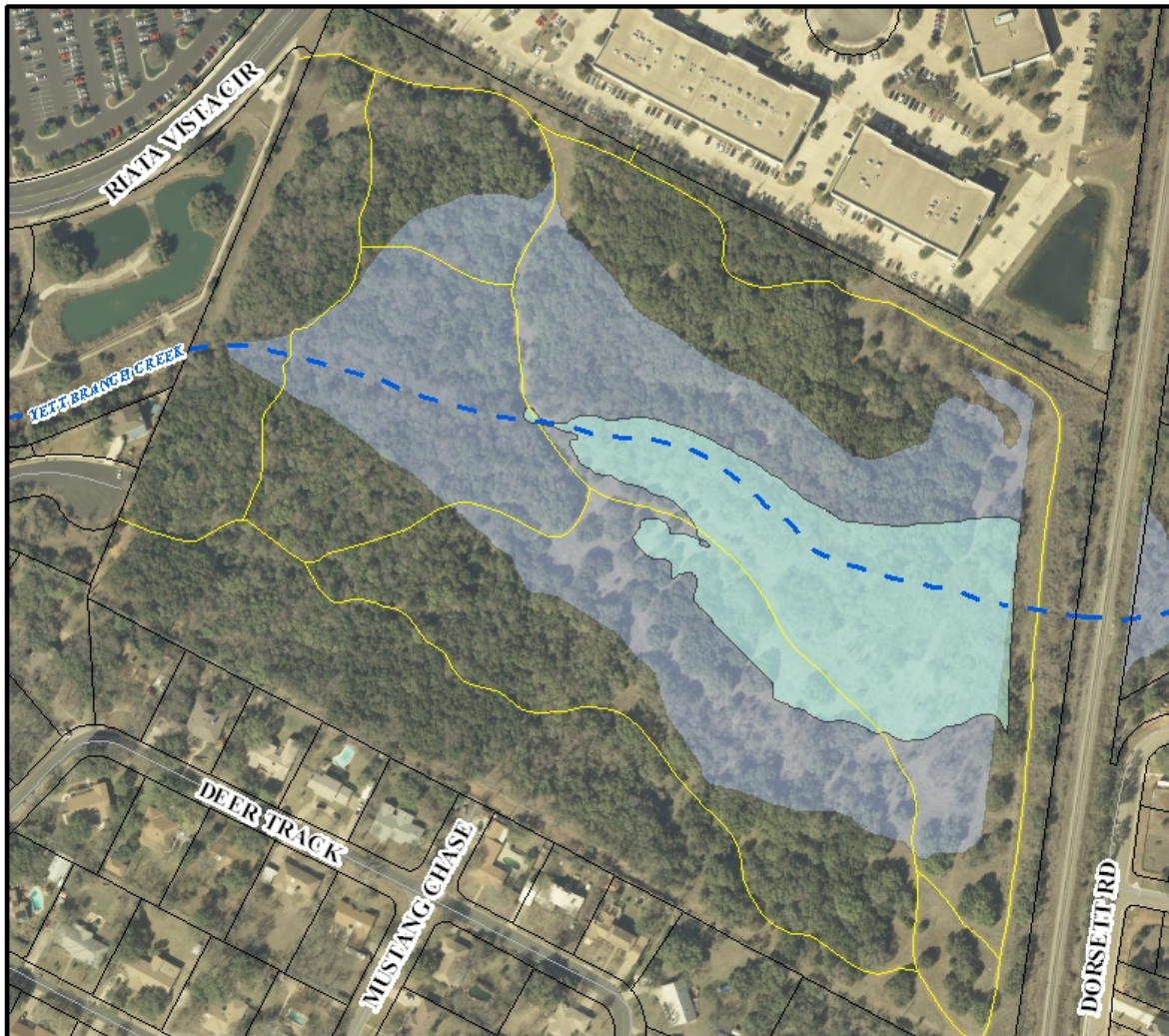


**Of the 52 emailed responses, 65% were in favor of the proposed fenced in area**  
**Support:**

- More responsible adults around the skate park
- An area for dogs to play and socialize with each other which is safe and secure
- Fills an OLA void in Southeast Austin – no need to travel long distances
- Many dog-owners live in the area who will be happy with such a facility

## **Concerns:**







- Budget cuts will not allow proper clean-up by city workers
- No real enforcement of dog licensing fees – no incentives for dog-owners to be 'good citizens'
- The park already has a skate park, pool and playground. Adding a dog park will overtax the existing facilities.
- There is existing wildlife including deer, coyotes, raccoon, squirrels and birds - addition of dogs will negatively affect it.
- The runoff from the dog park will negatively affect the spring fed pond immediately adjacent to the park and everything downstream including the home and Linder Elementary
- Conflicts between off leash dogs and minors using the pool, skate park and playground
- There is a children's playscape nearby, and this seems a crazy liability near unleashed dogs
- This will cause more dog fights, the spread of disease from sick dogs to well dogs



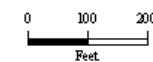
**Yett Creek Park:** Regional Detention/Flood Plain

10 June 2011 DW

### Legend

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

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# Public Process



## Yett Creek

- June 13, 2011- Public Meeting #1
- July 11, 2011 – Land, Facilities and Programs Committee – Staff Briefing
- July 26, 2011 – Parks and Recreation Board – Staff Briefing
- August 31, 2011 – Public Meeting #2

# Yett Creek Off Leash Trail Plan



YETT CREEK PARK - OFF LEASH TRAIL CONCEPT

CONCEPT "D"

# Public Meeting Comments Yett Creek



- Dogs are a threat to wildlife
- Uses the existing trail system and will be the least invasive new use
- Many people walk there dogs off leash in the park already
- Concern with parking in the neighborhood and primary access
- Concerned about loose dogs getting into backyards and running in the street
- Opportunity to install rules signage
- Avoid building new parking lots
- Since the neighborhood is unable to control loose dogs, how will this be different?
- Restrooms will attract vagrants
- Concerned with maintenance needs
- Will increase the security in the park
- Will reduce fire threat with improved access and eyes on
- Great opportunity to bring the community together and socialize our pets
- We enjoy the park as is
- Could keep others from using the park
- More users mean more crime
- Naïve to expect dog owners to control their pets
- Prefer the park be left as is





# Email Responses and Comments Yett Creek

**Of the 82 emails received, 68% were in favor of the off leash trail**

## **Support:**

- Opening Mustang Chase would allow for much needed access to the park by neighbors and emergency personnel and vehicles (fire truck entrance)
- Main opening on Riata Vista Circle would encourage non-neighborhood visitors traffic to stay out of the neighborhood (prevent parking issues)
- Opportunities for education and community activities (volunteerism, dog knowledge, dog socializing, exercise for all)
- More visitors to the park should help to eliminate vagrants, crime, graffiti, fires, and general misuse
- Located in NW Austin which needs more off leash trail areas
- They are such an important part of what makes Austin a great dog town.
- All dogs need to play and run with other dogs
- It may also eliminate the camps of the homeless.

## **Concerns:**

- Leash-free areas are a nuisance and lawsuit risk
- Citizens do not want direct access into Yett Creek Park from West Cowpath
- Citizens do not want parking spaces next to their homes
- No parking area for the park today aside from on-street parking
- Mustang Chase should not be an entrance
- Increased traffic presents danger to those walking, jogging, dogs on leash, baby carriages; possible increase in crime;
- This is a small park. Designating it for off leash use will mean there's not much left of the park for others to use
- The dog trail should be clearly marked and have a large wooded buffer from Angus Valley Neighborhood
- Need bike path and sidewalks to the park would be greatly appreciated
- Lack of Park Dept. enforcement and penalties when off-leash users fail to pick up their dog's poop
- Lack of Park Dept. monetary and personnel resources to keep the park clean for human use, to keep the vegetation and wildlife protected for sustainability



## Staff Recommendation

Staff supports and recommends the concept plans

- Provides improved distribution of Off Leash Amenities
- Increased public park activity will increase park user safety
- Provides a safe environment for dogs to play and socialize with other dogs

## Action Request

To Recommend to the Director to support moving forward with the design and permitting phase of the Off Leash Area for Mabel Davis District Park and the Off Leash Trail for Yett Creek Neighborhood Park.