

CHUGIAK-EAGLE RIVER DOG PARK SITE SELECTION STUDY

MARCH 2021



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1. INTRODUCTION



OVERVIEW

The mission of Chugiak-Eagle River Parks and Recreation is to enhance the quality of life for our growing community by developing and maintaining our parks, trails, and facilities. The department strives to balance the needs of all park users as new activities arise and existing activities become increasingly diversified.

As dog ownership increases, off-leash dog areas and dog parks have become a legitimate and necessary recreation amenity. Off-leash dog areas provide exercise and socialization opportunities that supplement on-leash areas at parks. These off-leash areas should accommodate the needs of dogs and their owners, all while not compromising the needs and uses of shared public space for other park users or the natural resources of the parks. All of the Municipality of Anchorage's seven dog parks are currently within Anchorage, leaving unmet demand for an off-leash dog park in the Chugiak-Eagle River area.

Residents have specifically expressed the desire for a dedicated off-leash dog park. In 2017, R&M Consultants conducted a survey of 329 Chugiak-Eagle River residents about dog park location preference. 75% of respondents were enthusiastic about an off-leash dog park in the area. Of those who wanted a park, 54% said they would use the park several times a week on a year-round basis. 47% said they would walk to a park if no parking was available.

R&M Consultants assisted the Municipality of Anchorage with a preliminary site selection study in the spring of 2018. Park Staff have since compiled the historical information, including community meeting notes, surveys and site analysis and processed the data into a refined assessment of five site alternatives for a potential dog park in the Chugiak-Eagle River area.

75% of Chugiak-Eagle River residents surveyed in 2017 expressed desire for an off-leash dog park in the area.



FACILITY TYPES

There are three (3) basic types of dog parks in the Municipality of Anchorage: dedicated off-leash areas, off-leash trails, and fenced dog parks. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) defines Dog Parks as “a contained public area where dog owners may allow their dogs to run off-leash.” Anchorage Municipal Code (AMC) Title 17 (Section 17.10.010) provides guidance for off-leash dogs in public places: “dogs in public places must be under control through a leash unless in a sanctioned off-leash dog area.”

OFF-LEASH DOG AREA

An off-leash dog area is a definable space within a park that is marked by signage as available for off-leash activities. Rather than being defined by fencing, the space is delineated by elements like topography, strategic landscaping, or trails. Amenities can vary from one park to another, but usually include waste receptacles, waste disposal bags, benches, and an information kiosk for rules and notices.

As noise conflicts can be an issue with dog parks, an ideal separation between a fenced dog area and businesses or residences is one hundred (100) feet; however, strategic landscaping or topographic changes can reduce the need for maximum separation. Best practices recommend that an off-leash dog area should be no fewer than one (1) acre in area. Off-leash areas should not negatively impact park primary use areas. An off-leash dog area will have permanent signage with hours of operation, rules and regulations, and contact information for the Parks and Recreation Department.

FENCED DOG PARK

A fenced dog park or dog run is a fenced area for dogs to socialize and exercise. Design elements can include a five (5) to six (6) foot tall perimeter fence with rounded corners (sharp corner angles can encourage dogs to corner other dogs), double gate for entry, waste receptacles, waste disposal bags, and benches. A fenced dog area should be no fewer than five thousand (5000) square feet in area.

Fenced dog parks are not recommended in floodplains, and should allow for positive water drainage, but not directly into a water source. A fenced dog area will have permanent signage with hours of operation, rules and regulations, and contact information for the Parks and Recreation Department.

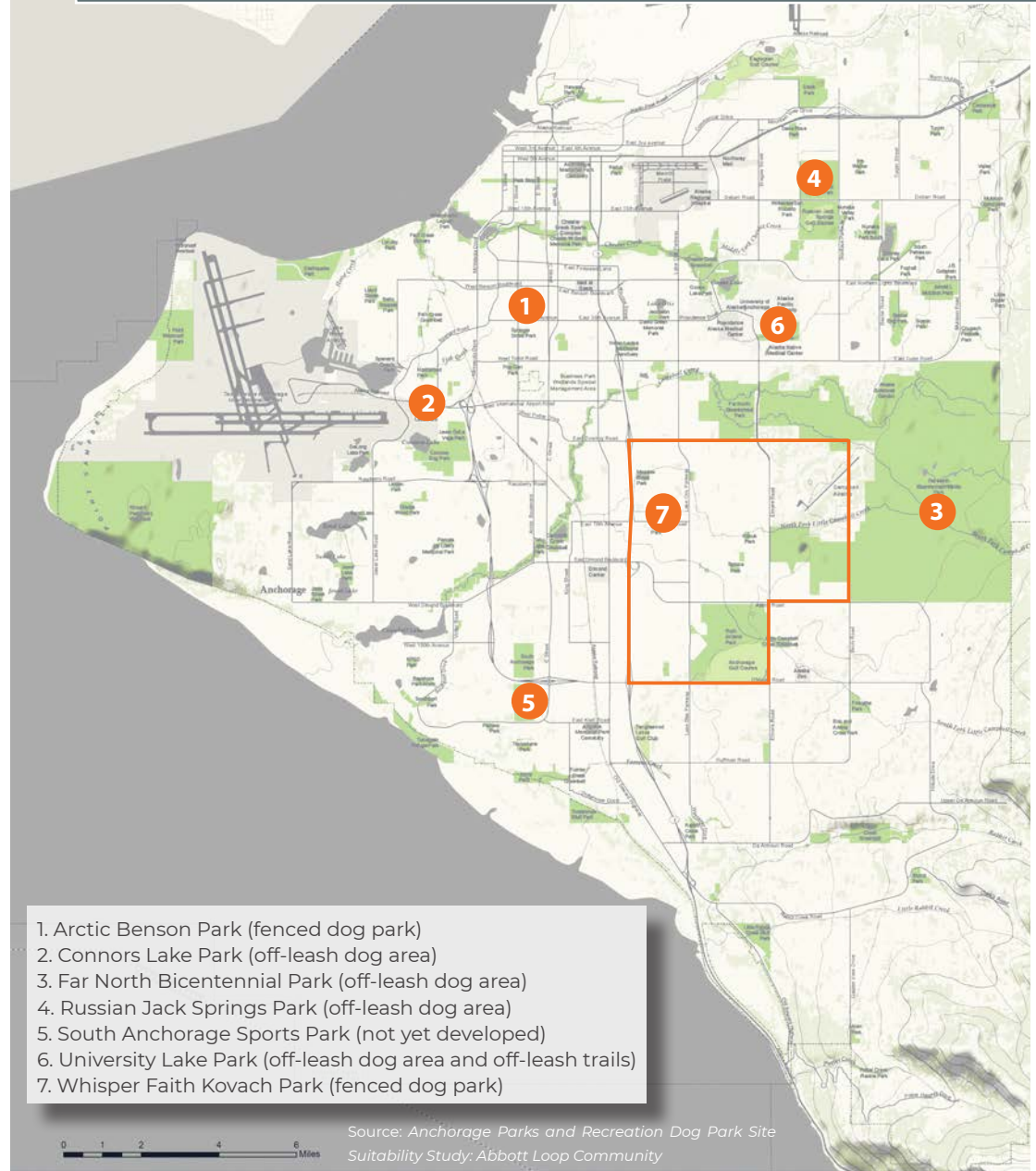
OFF-LEASH DOG TRAIL

While most trails in the Municipality allow dogs on a leash, a few are designated as off-leash trails. These trails are marked with signage, and owners must have sight and voice control of their dogs at all times.





EXISTING DOG PARK FACILITIES IN ANCHORAGE





2. SITE SELECTION CRITERIA



OVERVIEW

Chugiak-Eagle River Parks and Recreation performed a site selection study of municipal parkland in the area. The objective of the site selection study was to find a suitable site(s) of established parkland in which a fenced neighborhood dog park can be incorporated. Revitalization of an underutilized park or a conversion of current park use may be considered if park is confirmed by site selection criteria and community feedback.

Site selection criteria were developed based on guidance from the Municipality of Anchorage Off-Leash Dog Areas Strategic Action Plan and Off-Leash Dog Areas Matrix. The criteria are also informed from a 2017 survey of residents and coordination with the Chugiak-Eagle River Parks and Recreation Board of Supervisors. The minimum criteria are required to be met for a site to be considered in this study. The scoring criteria provide a way to rank the different sites and describe suitability for dog park development.

MINIMUM CRITERIA

LAND OWNERSHIP

The site selection study focuses on existing municipal park lands.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

There should not be culturally sensitive resources present on site, according to the Department of Natural Resources Office of History and Archaeology list of cultural resources.

LOCATION

The proposed park site should be easily accessible and in a central location that is advantageous for Chugiak-Eagle River residents to meet demand, offer equitable use of the facility, and maximize use.

SIZE

In the Eagle River Core, the total park size should be a minimum of one acre to provide room for dog use as well as space for separation from other uses and adjacent neighbors. In the Chugiak, Peters Creek, and Birchwood areas, dog parks larger than one acre are recommended as large lot residential development is common and defines the neighborhood character.

EXISTING USES

Existing park activities should not be significantly affected by the addition of a dog park, except for unused or vacant property which would bring a new use to the site. Winter recreation facilities that require groomed trails should be considered.



SCORING CRITERIA

ADJACENT ZONING

The zoning of the parcel and surrounding parcels should support a municipal dog park as an allowed use, as defined by Anchorage Municipal Code (AMC) Title 21 Land Use Code.

ADJACENT LAND USES

Land use compatibility is important for welcoming users to the new facility and ensuring the new facility integrates into the community. There should be existing natural buffers in the landscape or an opportunity to incorporate buffers to mitigate new park activity from surrounding uses.

EXISTING SITE OR MASTER PLAN

If the proposed park site has an existing Park Master Plan and or site plan that includes the creation of an off-leash dog area, the Chugiak-Eagle River Parks and Recreation Board of Supervisors and the community would have already reviewed and expressed support for a dog park in that location.

UTILITIES

The potential park site may include utilities such as electric for lighting and/or events, and water for a potential drinking fountain or hose bib.

COMPATIBLE WITH ENVIRONMENT

The proposed site should not contain any hazardous soils or conditions not easily mitigated with design interventions, or that would require significant additional permitting, such as large wetlands. Protected natural areas, environmentally sensitive areas, or significant wildlife habitat should be absent, avoided, or sufficiently buffered from a dog park site. When developing fenced enclosures, deterring wildlife (especially moose) is a primary concern. Safety for the dog owner is improved with additional access/exit gates and increased fence height.





NEIGHBORHOOD ACCESS, TRAFFIC, AND PARKING

Proposed sites outside the Eagle River Core should be accessible by vehicles and have more than one possible access route. The increases in potential vehicle traffic should not cause an undue burden on adjacent landowners. Parking areas at the proposed site should be easily accessible, include positive sight lines, offer sufficient space, and be within 500 feet or less of the designated off-leash area entry.

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

The site should be accessible by pedestrian facilities, including separated pathways and/or sidewalks with crossings from adjacent neighborhoods. Any proposed park site within the Eagle River Core should be accessible by separated pathways or sidewalks from surrounding residential neighborhoods within one mile of the park.

TOPOGRAPHY

Variations in topography, terrain, and micro-environments provide opportunities for dogs to exercise their bodies as well as their brain. These variations also encourage a positive experience for residents. There should be opportunity to mitigate any steep slopes or other topography constraints with design interventions (e.g., minor excavation, addition of a fence).

DRAINAGE

The dog park should drain adequately, and be free of standing or pooling water, stagnant ponds, or wetland areas. Dog parks should not be sited in areas where flooding occurs.

FENCES AND NATURAL BARRIERS

Fences, terrain, and natural barriers could render a site more desirable as a dog park, and should be able to be fenced if necessary. Sharp corners should be avoided in dog parks to encourage safe interactions between dogs.

COSTS

Implementation and construction of a dog park will require a variety of costs, which can significantly increase with design interventions required to make a successful dog park.

MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Access to trash receptacles and driveways for maintenance vehicles are important considerations in the siting of new dog parks.

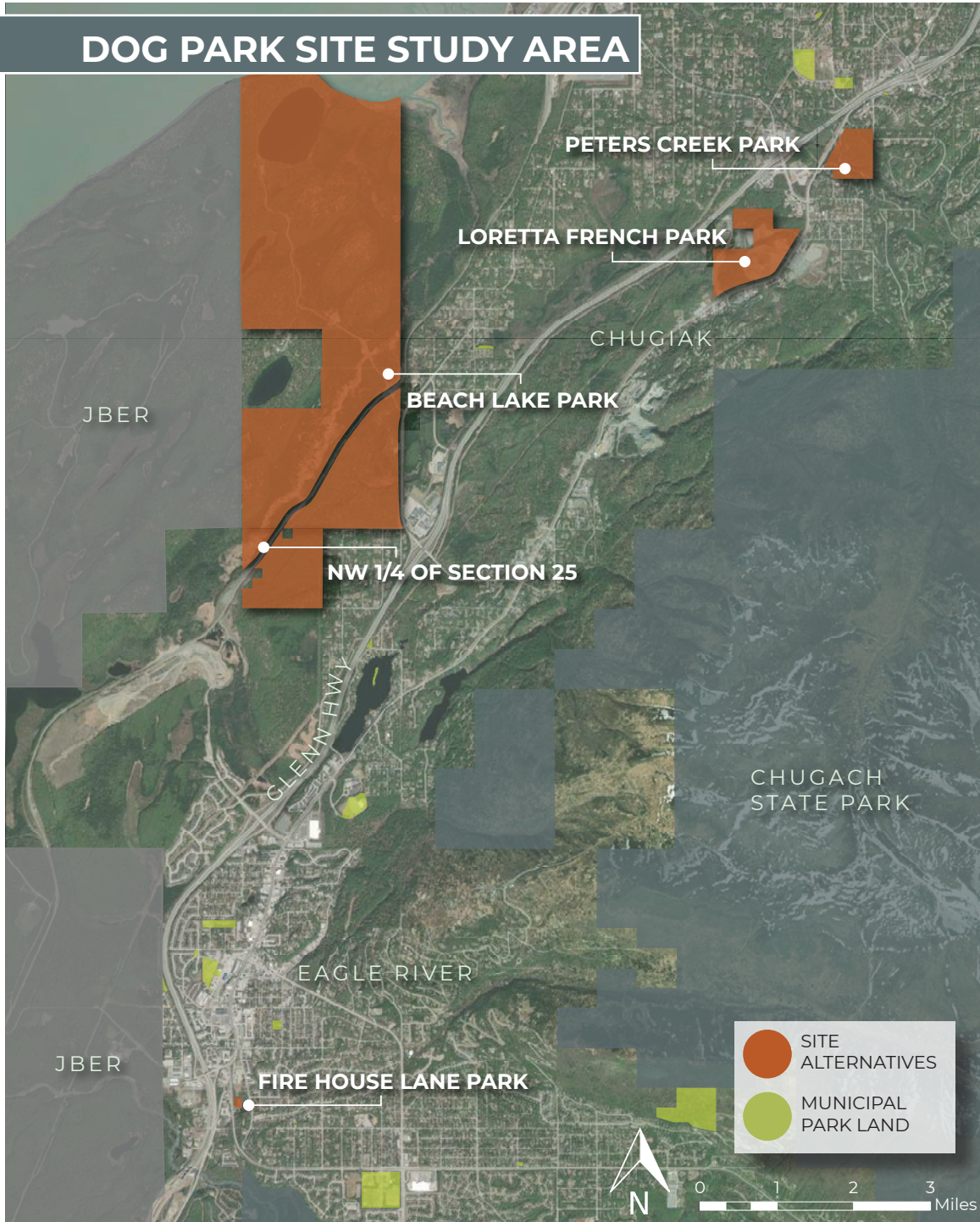




3. SITE ALTERNATIVES



DOG PARK SITE STUDY AREA



OVERVIEW

The following sites were identified as possible candidates for siting new dog parks. At the north end of the study area are the communities of Chugiak, Birchwood, and Peters Creek. At the south end of the study area is the Eagle River Core.

These 5 sites are compared in the following section.

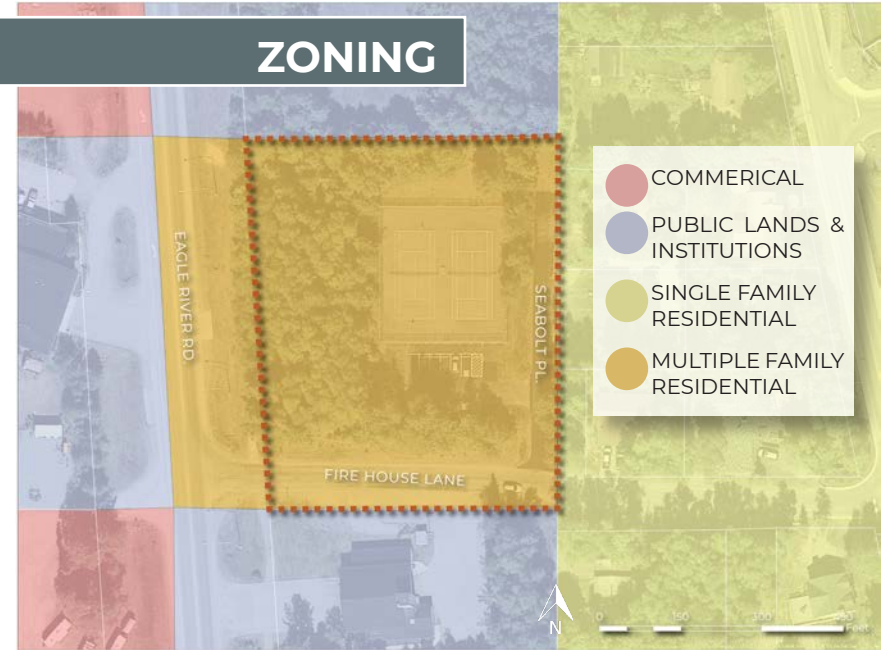


SITE 1: FIRE HOUSE LANE PARK

AERIAL VIEW



ZONING



SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Fire House Lane Park is a 1.8 acre park in Eagle River, adjacent to Eagle River Elementary School. Approximately half of the parcel consists of existing tennis courts and a parking lot, and the remaining half is undeveloped forested land with pedestrian social trails. Walkability is high for Fire House Lane Park, located near downtown Eagle River, which may help offset the need for additional parking with the added use of a dog park.

CURRENT USES

The park is currently used for recreation at the tennis courts and as a public thoroughfare to the elementary school. Social trails exist in the wooded section west of the tennis courts.



FIRE HOUSE LANE PARK: OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

OPPORTUNITIES

- Location within the Eagle River core can serve a larger population.
- Walkability to the park offsets the need for additional parking.
- There is current use by neighbors and local dog walkers on the existing network of social trails.
- The addition of a system of gates would allow for pedestrian traffic to flow through the park to the school.
- Tennis courts are fenced and could be a compatible use.
- Design could reasonably mitigate concerns with the location of the dog park by Eagle River Elementary school and residential properties.
- A smaller dog use area could be adequate to meet the needs of local Eagle River residents.
- If fenced, this site could also house a small dog-only area on the lawn north of the existing tennis courts.
- With appropriate site-specific planning and design, the addition of a dog park can be compatible with the continued successful use of the park.

RECOMMENDATION

With the future addition of sidewalks along Fire House Lane and Seabolt Place, Fire House Lane Park will be considered for a high priority neighborhood-scale fenced dog park.

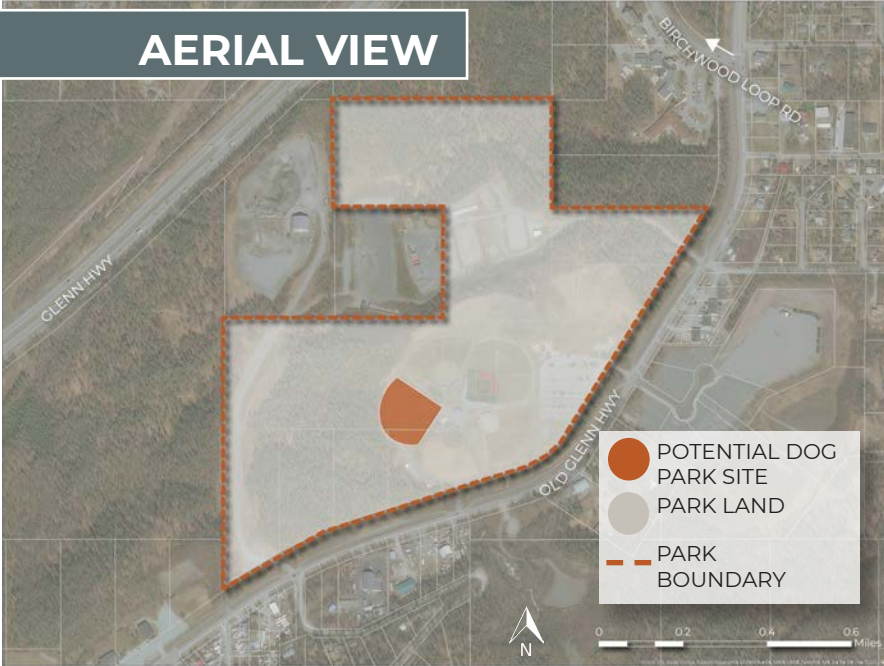
CONSTRAINTS

- Currently a sidewalk only exist along western boundary of park.
- Limited parking available with small neighborhood-scale parking lot.
- If dog park were to become too popular, residents along Seabolt Place may be impacted by over-flow on-street parking.



SITE 2: LORETTA FRENCH PARK

AERIAL VIEW

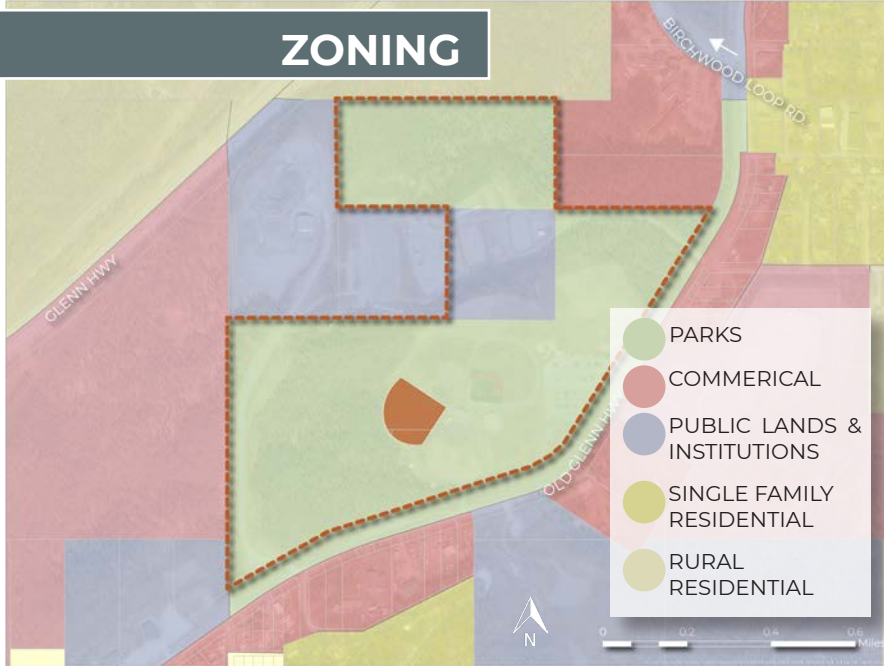


SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Loretta French Park is located off the Old Glenn Highway approximately 5.5 miles north of Eagle River. The 25-acre sports complex includes five fenced baseball diamonds, dugouts, a concession stand, a playground, a skate park, public portable toilets, a basketball court, and a large parking lot. There are two steep hills to the west and north at the property boundary on the otherwise flat site.

The specific site under consideration is one of the fenced baseball fields, approximately 2 acres in size, which would be repurposed to a dedicated off-leash dog park.

ZONING



CURRENT USES

The park is regularly used for baseball and flag football games, by families with small children, and by dog owners. Leashed dog walkers frequent the park and are encouraged to use one of three dog waste stations located at the park entry, near the sports fields and by basketball court.



LORETTA FRENCH PARK: OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

OPPORTUNITIES

- This site has existing parking, wayfinding, and an established multi-use pathway.
- A current social trail begins at the maintenance gate, continues over the hill, and travels around the perimeter of the park.
- Dog walkers currently park here and use the Old Glenn Highway multi-use path.

CONSTRAINTS

- All five fields are frequently permitted for events and tournaments, and existing users would be displaced.
- The field is already fenced, but is close to other park amenities and ball fields.
- Dog park use has the potential to conflict with users of the playground, skate park, ball fields, archery range, adjacent equestrian facility, and radio-controlled plane area.
- An existing private fenced dog park is located about a 1/2 mile south of the park.

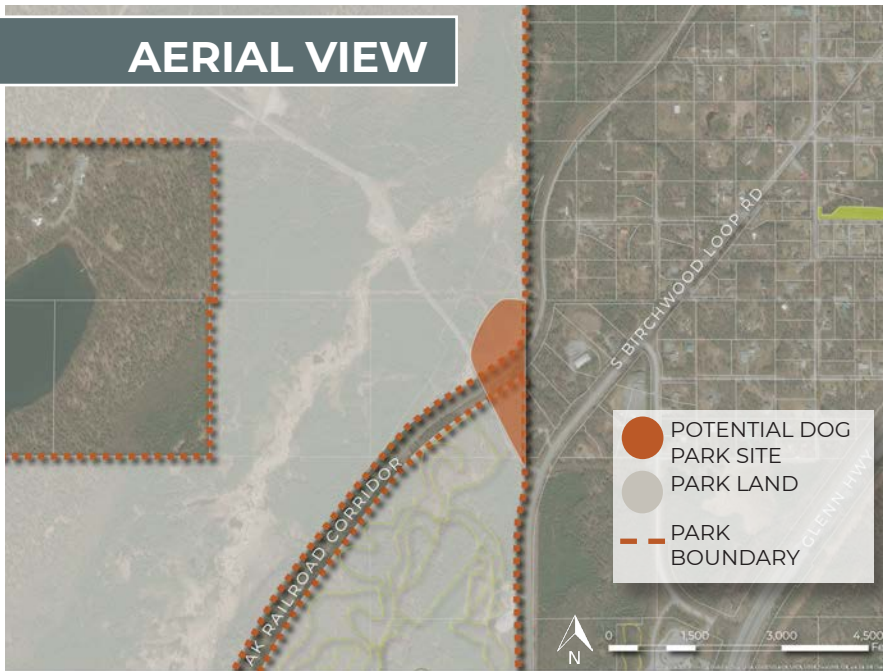
RECOMMENDATION

Loretta French Park is not recommended for dog park development. The potential area in question is frequently permitted for use. Current demand on the adjacent park ball fields and amenities would result in direct conflict with off-leash dogs and other park users. If future demand for more dog park facilities is requested by the community, it is recommended that this park be re-evaluated to identify a more optimal fenced area site.

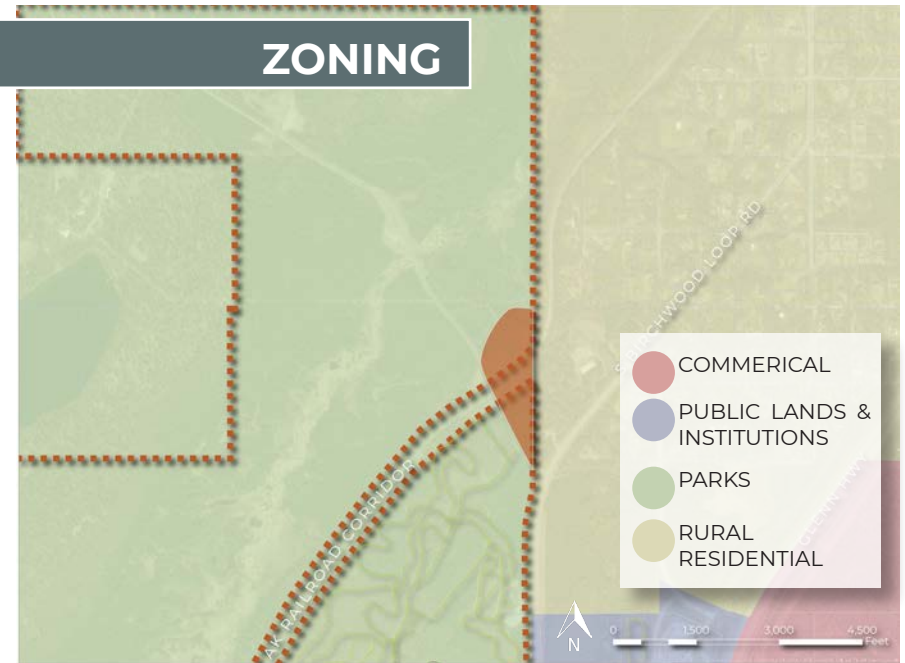


SITE 3: BEACH LAKE PARK

AERIAL VIEW



ZONING



SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Beach Lake Regional Park consists of 1,750 acres of park land. The potential dog park site is a 7.8 acre parcel west of South Birchwood Loop Road, bisected by the Alaska Railroad (ARRC) where vegetation has been cleared in the right-of-way. The remainder of the parcel is heavily vegetated with large trees.

CURRENT USES

The site is currently used for access to the railroad for maintenance and for recreational dog mushing. Beach Lake Park to the south, west, and north are used for cross-country skiing and dog mushing on a well-established trail system. Parking for the site is limited to the new parking lot on the south side of Beach Lake Road, since accessing and parking near the railroad tracks is prohibited. The Beach Lake Regional Park Conceptual Development Plan (2011) recommends an off-leash dog park in this area, contingent on the ARRC realigning the track.



BEACH LAKE PARK: OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

OPPORTUNITIES

- Adding a fence and other preventative buffer features could prevent trespassing and to avoid park user/dog and train conflicts.
- The variety between cleared open space and wooded areas provides terrain choices for dog park users and their dogs.
- A new parking lot, as identified in the Beach Lake Regional Park Master Plan, would help establish clear access points and mitigate trespassing concerns.

CONSTRAINTS

- The railroad and roadway corridor may interfere with user experience and traffic flow.
- The railroad realignment is critical for the addition of a dog park in this location. It is unknown if or when the realignment will occur.
- Across from the railroad to the northeast, a newly re-zoned residential area is being developed to accommodate equestrians. The abundance of horses in this area could be a conflict with off-leash dogs.
- Buffering may be necessary to accommodate nearby residential areas.
- With existing parking located on the south side of Beach Lake Road, a safe pedestrian connection and railroad track crossing would need to be considered in future design. A new parking lot may be required if the railroad cannot accommodate pedestrian access.

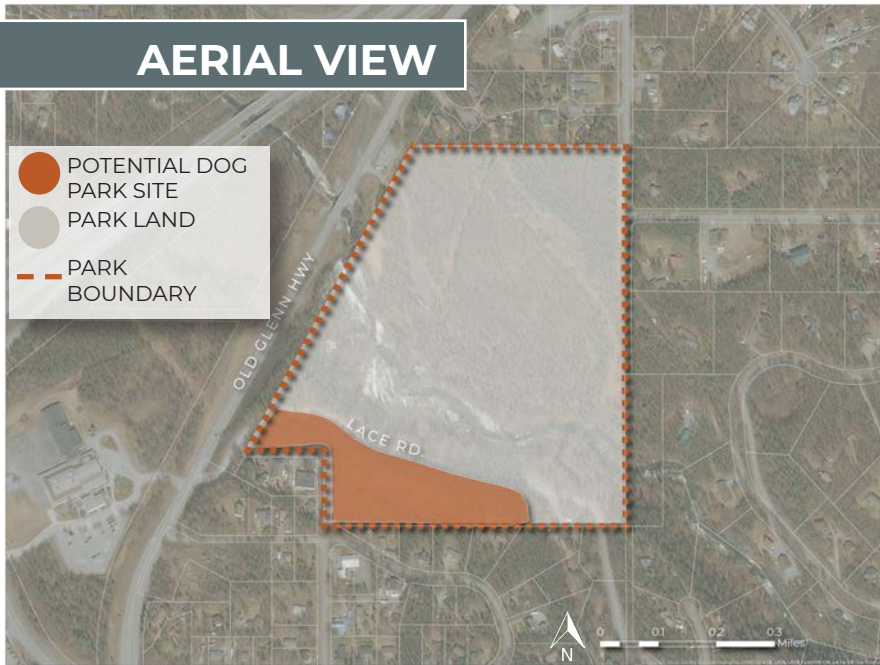
RECOMMENDATION

This site is not recommended due to current conflicts with railroad use, existing dog mushing activities, and limited parking adjacent to the parcel. This park presents an opportunity to host a future dog park facility with further design development. It is recommended that the existing master plan be revisited and updated in future planning efforts.

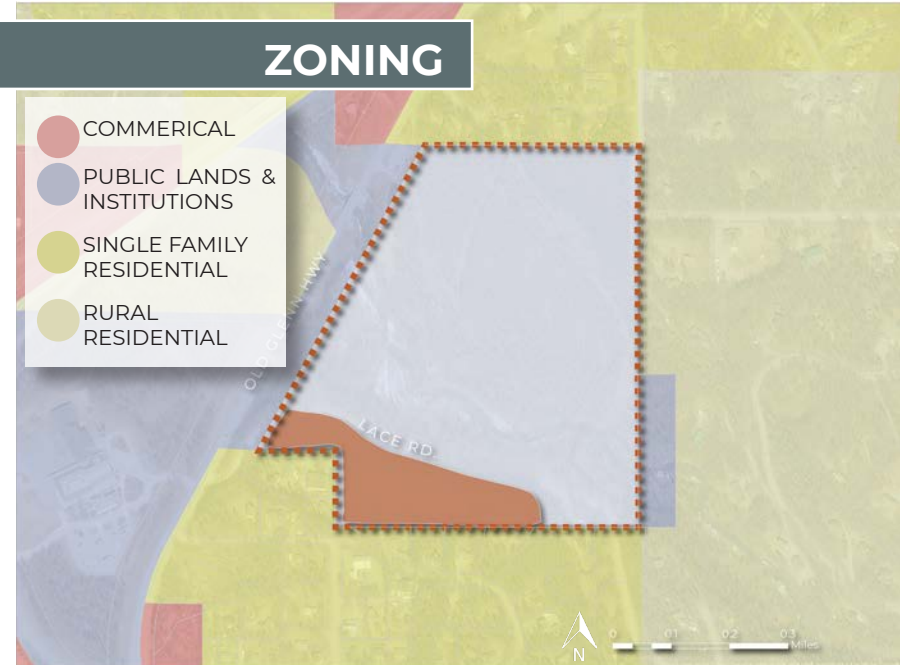


SITE 4: PETERS CREEK PARK

AERIAL VIEW



ZONING



SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Peters Creek Park is located across the Old Glenn Highway and from Chugiak Elementary School in Chugiak. The potential dog park site is 6.7 acres, bounded at the north by a ridgeline with a steep bluff down to Lace Road. At the southern boundary of the site, gradual slopes at eventually meet the elevation of residences to the south and east. The undeveloped site has a natural bowl shape. Social trails and off-road vehicle tracks indicate informal use. The rest of the 50-acre Peters Creek Park north of Lace Road is used for recreational activities and includes a park picnic shelter, creek access, a disc golf course, and established trails.

CURRENT USES

Informal use by residents.



PETERS CREEK PARK: OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

OPPORTUNITIES

- Few or no known conflicting uses within this part of the park.
- Close to residential areas in the Chugiak-Peters Creek area.
- The variations in topography, including steep ridgelines and vegetative cover, provide for interesting terrain for canines and their humans to explore if park boundaries are adequately designed with fencing and signage.
- Drainage issues can be addressed through site grading and design.
- Utilities are accessible through utility connections that service the adjacent residential properties.

CONSTRAINTS

- The site is undeveloped and costs could be elevated by adding parking, lighting, signage, drainage facilities, and fencing.
- Steep slopes will require mitigation through site design. Development of the level areas for a dog park is feasible while leaving the steeper sections undeveloped.
- Residential properties requiring buffering from noise and other potential dog park nuisances.
- More than 5 miles from the Eagle River core area, this location will require driving for Eagle River residents.

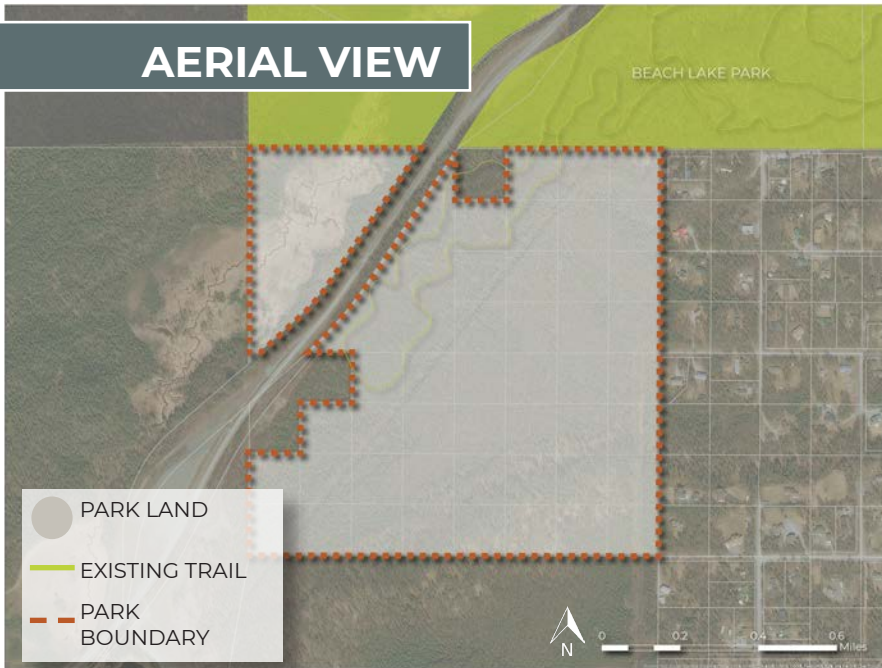
RECOMMENDATION

This site is recommended as an opportunity for a community-use dog park with no known competing uses. It will require resources to mitigate the concerns of buffering, parking, and maintenance.



SITE 5: NW 1/4 OF SECTION 25 (BEACH LAKE PARK)

AERIAL VIEW



SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Section 25 is located in Chugiak, west of South Birchwood Loop Road near Chugiak High School. This section of Beach Lake Park includes 145 acres accessible at the northwest quarter of Section 25. The Alaska Railroad diagonally traverses this area and eliminates access to the upper northwest section. The site includes three main areas, distinguished by elevation. The lowland areas of the site include the developed and lighted Hill Loop Trail, connecting north to Beach Lake Park. The rest of the site is undeveloped woodland with informal recreation trails. Residents access this site from three dead-end streets in a low-density neighborhood to the southeast of Hillcrest Drive and the South Birchwood Loop Road/Glenn Highway interchange.

ZONING



CURRENT USES

The Hill Loop Trail accommodates multi-use traffic. Informal trails exist throughout the site.



NW 1/4 OF SECTION 25: OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

OPPORTUNITIES

- The Beach Lake Regional Park Master Plan identifies scenic view areas, footpaths, the expansion of unmaintained ski trails, multi-use trails, a future park reserve, and an erosion protection zone in the southeast corner of Section 25. A designated off-leash dog area would not interfere with these improvements and could increase the use of future trails.
- The large site provides a range of topographical changes and offers expansive views and opportunities for park users and dogs to explore new territories.
- The Hill Loop Trail is an existing lighted trail in the northwest area of Section 25 that originates in the Beach Lake Regional Park parcel to the north.
- Utility connection may also be available from the lines servicing the residential neighborhood to the east.

CONSTRAINTS

- Wayfinding and adding a dedicated parking lot may be needed to meet the anticipated demand of an off-leash dog area at this site.
- The site is environmentally stable except for Type A wetlands present on the northwestern corner. Minor site planning and design and municipal permitting may be needed to mitigate wetland concerns.
- Steep slopes may require site design and grading to mitigate potentially steep ridgeline and Alaska Railroad conflicts.

RECOMMENDATION

This site is not recommended for development until community vision for the entire park is determined through future planning and community outreach.



SITE COMPARISON SUMMARY

The Site Criteria Matrix in **Appendix A** provides a detailed comparison and summary of each site. At a Parks and Recreation Board of Supervisors work session on January 8, 2018, all five sites were reviewed. The Board determined that it was important to prioritize two preferred sites that serve both Eagle River and the greater Chugiak area.

ELIMINATED SITES

This research suggests that several sites are less suitable for use as a dog park and should be eliminated.

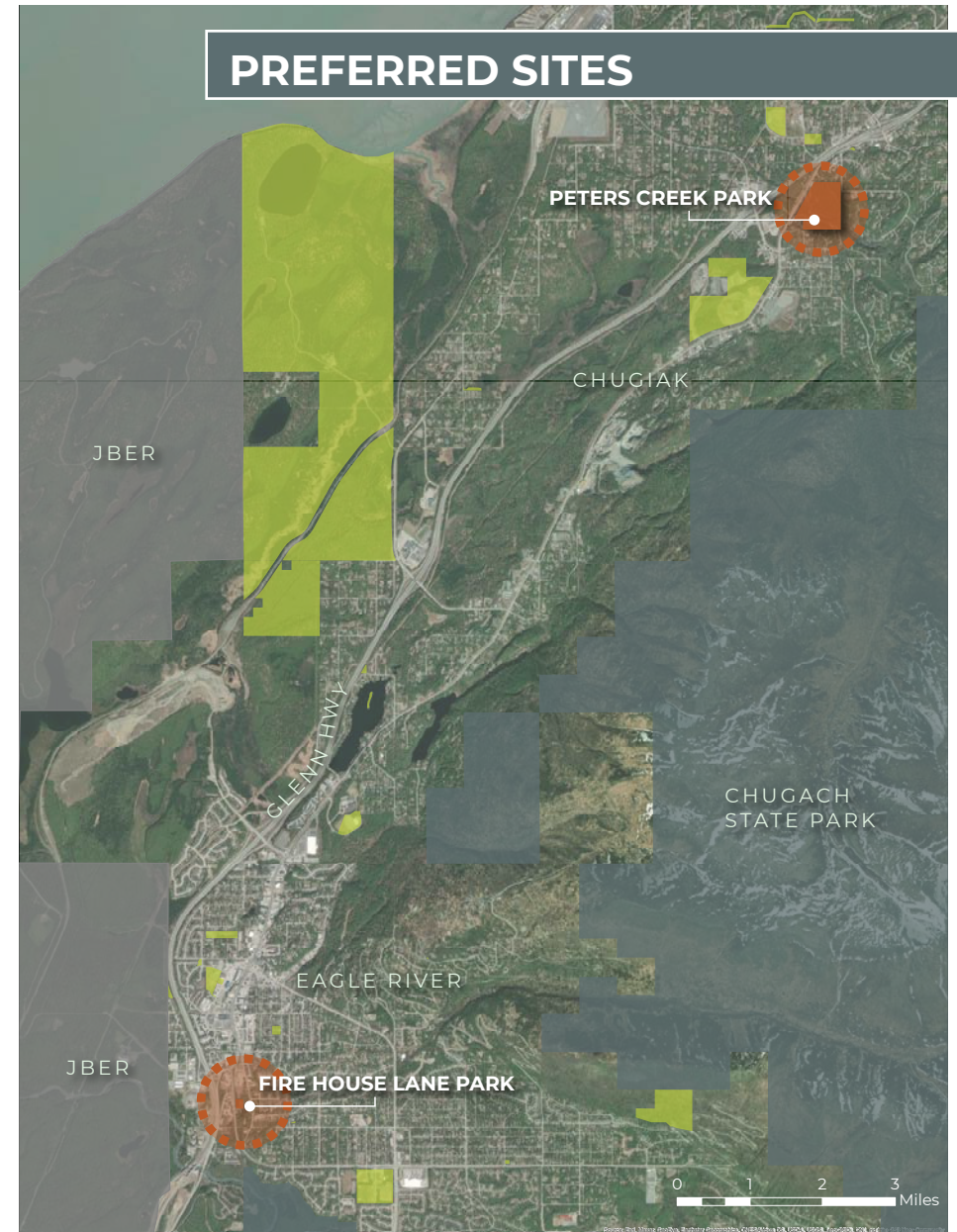
- **Site 3: Beach Lake Park** due to possible conflicts with railroad use, existing dog mushing activities, and limited parking adjacent to the parcel.
- **Site 2: Loretta French Park** because of existing user conflicts.
- **Site 5: NW ¼ section of Section 25** due to need for future planning.

RECOMMENDED SITES

Based on site criteria, compatibility of existing uses, and the ease of maintenance and management, this study has identified two sites as preferred alternatives for the development of an off-leash dog park.

- **Site 1: Fire House Lane Park** to serve the Eagle River core area; and
- **Site 4: Peter's Creek Park** to serve the Chugiak-Eagle River community at large.

The following section provides conceptual designs for the two highest ranking sites alongside a narrative of development options for each site for public presentation and consideration.







4. PREFERRED SITE PROPOSALS



PETERS CREEK DOG PARK: CONCEPT DESCRIPTION

Peters Creek Park has been recommended as the highest priority site to be developed based on all identified criteria. The park has the potential to develop a fully enclosed off-leash dog park in the south section of the park. Other undeveloped parcels within Peters Creek Park are identified for potential use as well and described below.

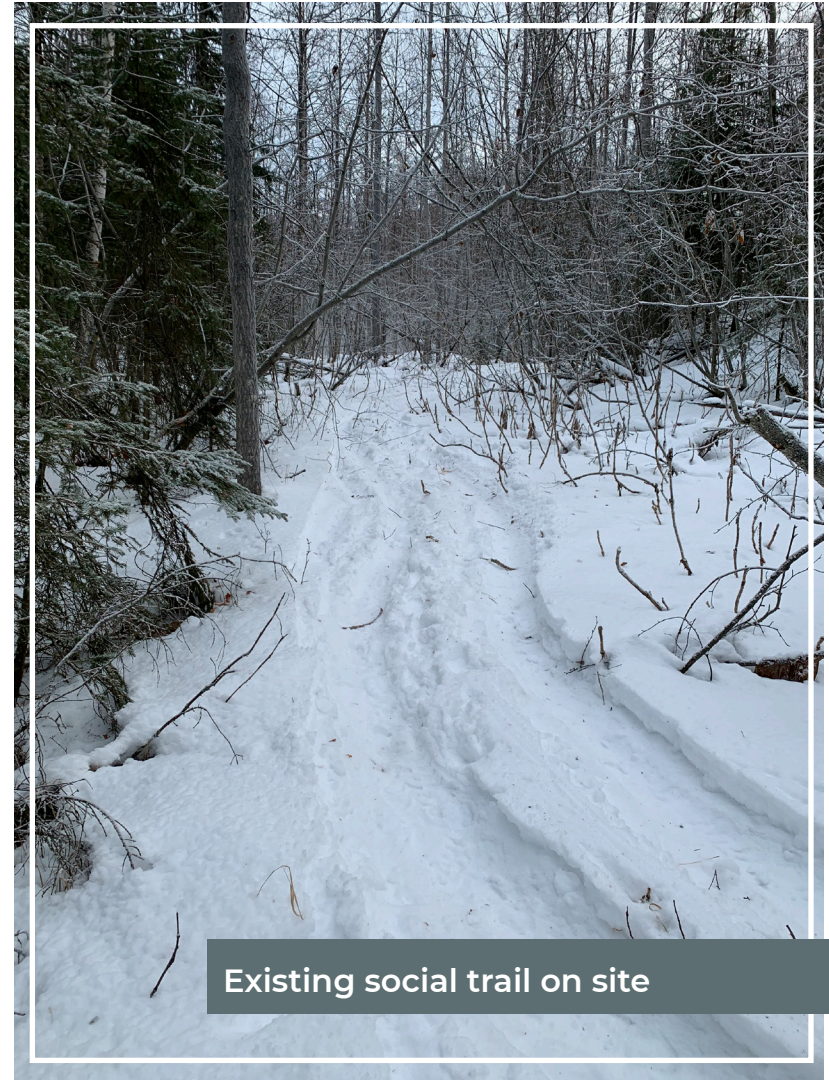
SOUTH SECTION - PHASE I

This report presents a conceptual design for an off-leash dog park in the South Section of the Peters Creek Park (Lace Road and Hunters Drive) including the following features:

- New accessible **parking lot with lighting**.
- **Double-gated entrance** for safe unleashing of dogs.
- **Signage** (rules and regulations).
- **Amenities** (trash cans, mutt mitts, and seating including a combination of benches and boulders).
- New **fenced off-leash dog park** with two zones providing opportunities for all abilities of park visitors.
- An **upper dog park area** in the southwest corner of the parcel offers an accessible compacted gravel path and seating area. The relatively level upper area includes opportunities for selective vegetation removal to improve safety and offer area for dog play equipment in the future.
- A **varied terrain area** located in the northeast section offers opportunities for a rustic woodland experience, including a 4-foot wide soft-surface trail that winds along the ridge to the north and provides access to a view over Peters Creek park and the Chugach, Talkeetna, and Alaska mountain ranges.
- Natural terrain features including berms, ridges, and drainage swales work as **interior park boundaries**, while the entire 3.5-acre area would be fenced.
- **Landscaping**: selective thinning of existing vegetation along the perimeter. A vegetation buffer of 25-30 feet, where possible, would remain. Interior park vegetation would be thinned, and mulch would be spread in open areas to maintain a naturalistic, woodland

vegetation surface.

- **Maintenance** would easily access the park through a separate gate to allow for access to interior site amenities and trash receptacles located on the gravel pad in the upper dog park area.



Existing social trail on site



PETERS CREEK DOG PARK: SITE CONCEPT

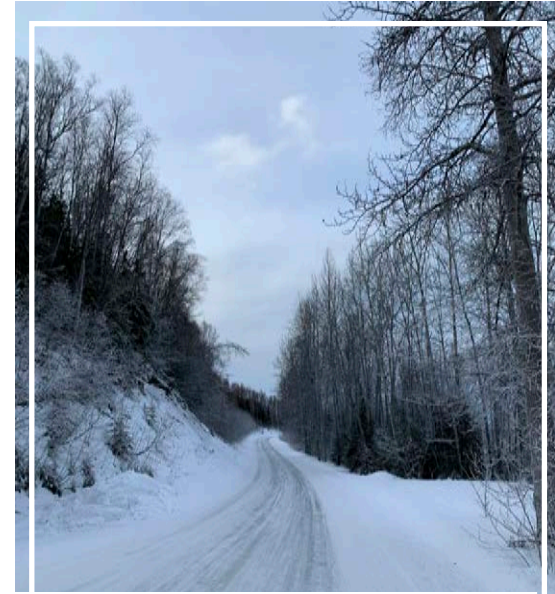


- A** Dog park entry gate
- B** Park sign
- C** Parking area (14 spaces)
- D** Lighting (2 total)
- E** Boulders and existing vegetation buffer
- F** Maintenance gate and gravel pad for turnaround
- G** Benches (2 total)
- H** Trash bins
- I** Vegetation buffer
- J** **UPPER LEVEL DOG PARK:** flat surface with 6-foot wide compacted gravel path, potential agility training area
- K** 6-foot tall chain link dog park fence
- L** Native vegetation buffer (minimum 25-30 feet)
- M** Selective vegetation thinning, maintaining natural wooded characteristics of site
- N** **LOWER LEVEL DOG PARK:** uneven surface with nature-play dog features
- O** Soft surface 4 ft wide trail to follow contours of site.
- P** Scenic viewpoint to north





Utility corridor on southern boundary, looking east



Bluff on northern boundary, looking west from Lace Road

PHASE II SECTION

The section to the north of Lace Road and south of Peters Creek could become a partially fenced 3-acre off-leash dog area with an access gate traversing along the existing recreation path to the west. The natural steepness of the embankment north of Lace Road and the south side of the creek serve as natural barriers. The site could remain as-is with no other major improvements. Social trails would likely develop with regular use, but it is not recommended to construct anything permanent in this area due to potential for seasonal flooding.

DISC GOLF COURSE

The existing central section of Peters Creek Park is occupied by the Disc Golf course and a picnic shelter is frequently rented for weddings. The interior existing parking lot could potentially serve dog park users wishing to utilize a designated off-leash dog park if additional areas within the park become dog-friendly. Further planning would be required to reduce user conflicts.

NORTHEAST SECTION

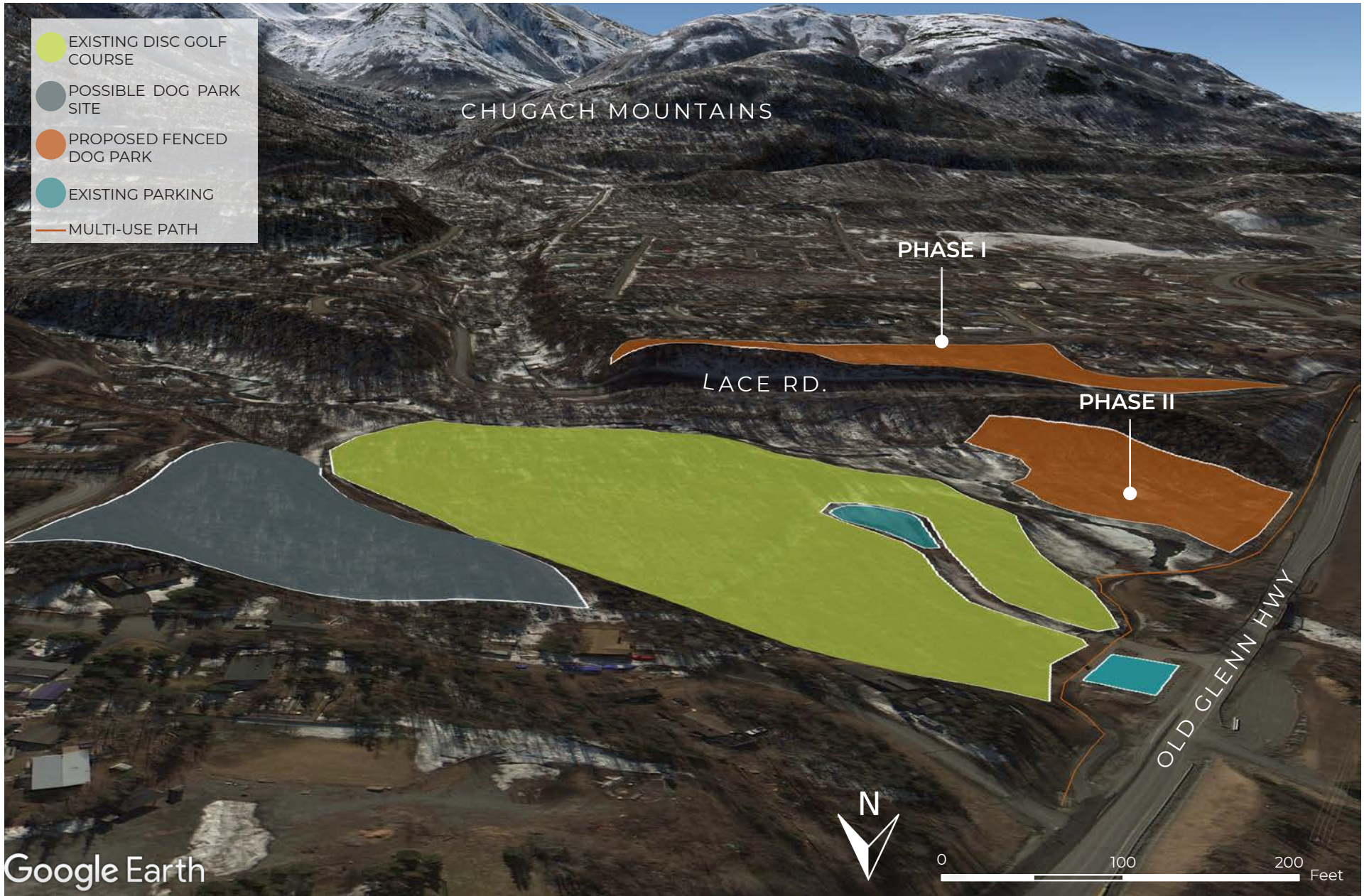
The northeast corner of the park located off Chapel Drive includes approximately 4 acres of undeveloped park property. With proper planning, this site could include an additional off-leash dog park or off-leash trails. Social trails exist within the park connecting the disc golf area up a relatively steep hillside to this area, but there is no parking available. Design would need to include a parking lot for ADA access with lighting and as such, this site was not recommended for the first phase of development.



PETERS CREEK DOG PARK: NORTH VIEW



PETERS CREEK DOG PARK: SOUTH VIEW



FIRE HOUSE LANE DOG PARK: CONCEPT DESCRIPTION

Fire House Lane Park has been identified as an ideal site for serving local neighbors within walking distance from the Eagle River core area. This park lends itself to a neighborhood-scale fenced dog park. In order to reduce demand on the park, it is not recommended for development until after a community-use dog park is constructed. The site's existing 6-car parking lot and tennis courts offer an opportunity to reimagine the park without conflicting with existing users. Additionally, future construction of sidewalks along adjacent roads should be completed prior to or in collaboration with development of this dog park.

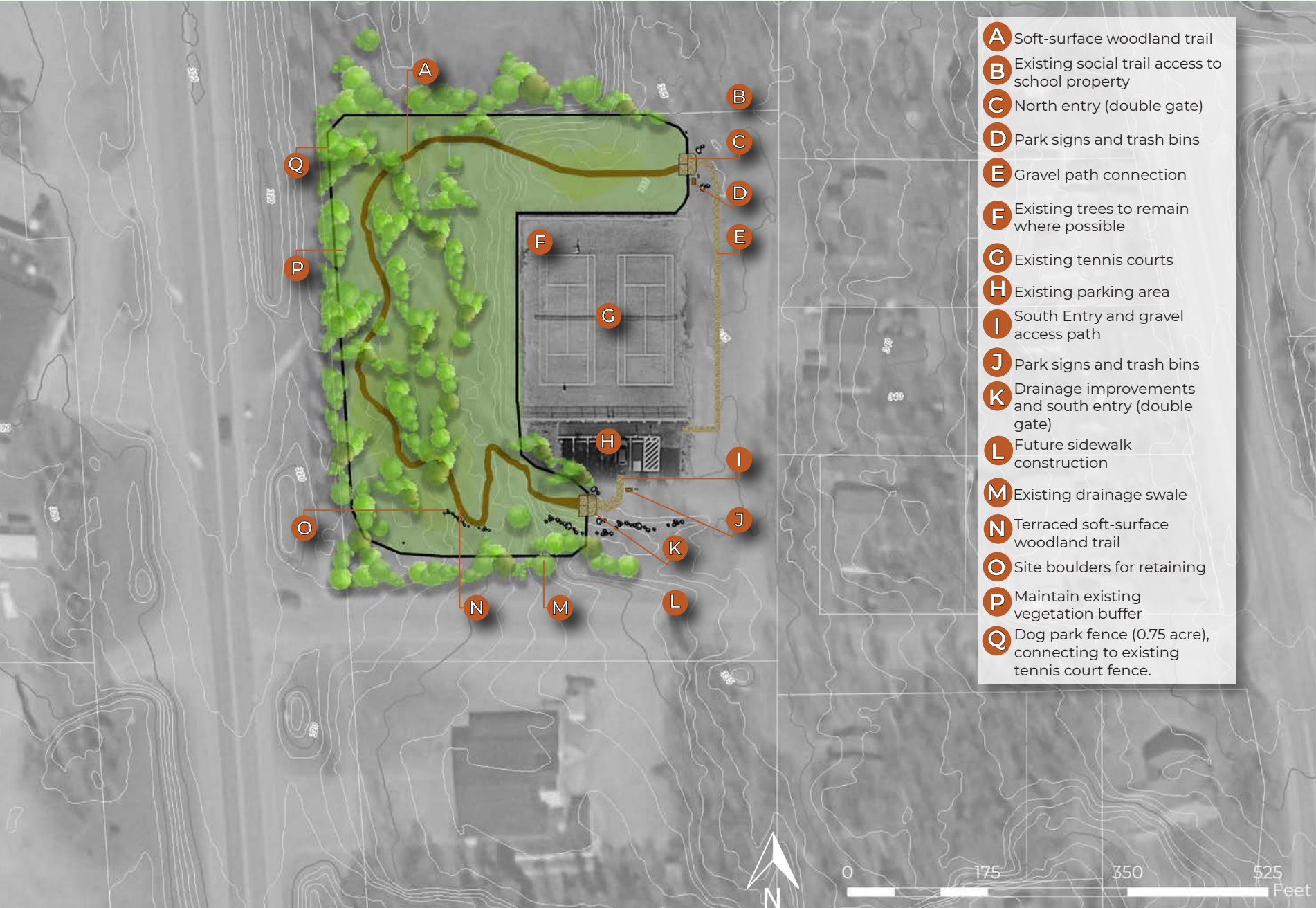
Currently the site has a network of social trails that appear to be heavily used by neighborhood dog walkers. Formalizing such dog park user activity into a managed park amenity would improve safety, access, and drainage, as well as reduce the negative impacts on neighboring residents. The conceptual design illustrates the following features:

DESIGN FEATURES

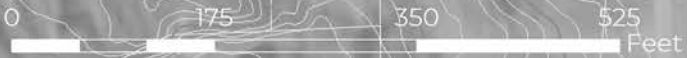
- **Drainage improvements**
- **Improved access** from existing parking lot
- **Double-gated entrances** on south and north access for safe unleashing of dogs
- **Signage** (rules and regulation)
- **Amenities** (trash cans, mutt mitts, and seating including a combination of benches and boulders)
- New **fenced off-leash dog park**, approximately 0.5 to 0.75 acres
- New defined **soft-surface trails** that wind through existing forested area to the south of the tennis courts
- New north-south **gravel path connection** from parking lot to provide an accessible flat area for smaller dogs (could be fenced off separately)
- **Landscaping:** selective thinning of existing vegetation would occur within the western section of the park for improved safety site lines. A vegetation buffer of 25-30 feet, where possible, would remain along perimeter; however, the fence line would be sited along the western property line and connect to the tennis court. Interior park vegetation would be thinned and mulch would be spread in open areas to maintain a naturalistic, woodland vegetation surface.
- **Maintenance** would access the park at the entrances with all amenities and trash receptacles to be located on the outside of the access gates.
- An **alternate access gate** could be situated off the south perimeter and would be sited in collaboration with the Streets Department.



FIRE HOUSE LANE DOG PARK: SITE CONCEPT



- A** Soft-surface woodland trail
- B** Existing social trail access to school property
- C** North entry (double gate)
- D** Park signs and trash bins
- E** Gravel path connection
- F** Existing trees to remain where possible
- G** Existing tennis courts
- H** Existing parking area
- I** South Entry and gravel access path
- J** Park signs and trash bins
- K** Drainage improvements and south entry (double gate)
- L** Future sidewalk construction
- M** Existing drainage swale
- N** Terraced soft-surface woodland trail
- O** Site boulders for retaining
- P** Maintain existing vegetation buffer
- Q** Dog park fence (0.75 acre), connecting to existing tennis court fence.



COST ESTIMATE MATRIX

FIRE HOUSE LANE DOG PARK			PETERS CREEK DOG PARK		
ITEM	APPROX. COST	NOTES	ITEM	APPROX. COST	NOTES
Soft-Costs	\$15,000.00	Survey, engineering design, construction bid docs, construction admin, inspection	Soft-Costs	\$40,000.00	Survey, engineering design, lighting electric engineering, construction bid docs, construction admin, inspection
Fencing	\$27,475.00	6' Chain link 965 lf	Fencing	\$41,580.00	6' Chain link 1848 lf
Maint. Gate	\$600.00	1 12 Ft. Maint. Gate	Double-gate fence	\$1,800.00	4 Double gates
Double-gate fence	\$3,600.00	8 Double gates	Maint. Gate	\$600.00	1 12 Ft. Maint. Gate
Benches	\$2,400.00	2 Victor stanley park benches	Benches	\$2,400.00	2 Victor stanley park benches
Waste Recepticles	\$3,000.00	2 Bear-proof cans plus concrete pads	Waste Recepticles	\$6,000.00	4 Bear-proof cans plus concrete pads
Waste Bag Stations	\$1,400.00	2 Stations; bag refills about \$100/yr	Waste Bag Stations	\$2,800.00	4 Stations; bag refills about \$100/yr
Sign	\$750.00	Hardware, concrete pad, sign, post	Sign	\$750.00	Hardware, concrete pad, sign, post
Drainage (culvert)	\$5,852.00	Construct ditch and install 12" culvert	Parking Lot	\$161,457.00	*Materials cost may be reduced
Trail (gravel)	\$4,968.00	400 lf	Trail (mulch)	\$4,968.00	1,656 lf
Trail (mulch)	\$1,500.00	500 lf	Lighting	\$51,960.00	3 Lights (\$4400 ea)
Topsoil/Seed	\$1,170.00	Disturbed areas	Topsoil/Seed	\$4,680.00	Disturbed areas
ESTIMATED TOTAL	\$67,715.00		ESTIMATED TOTAL	\$318,995.00	







5. CONCLUSION



RECOMMENDATIONS

A dog park is a practical option for diversifying park activities while accommodating the increasing population of dog owners in Chugiak-Eagle River. Dog parks are family destinations that can be used year-round and provide opportunities for fresh air, exercise, pet bonding time, and community building.

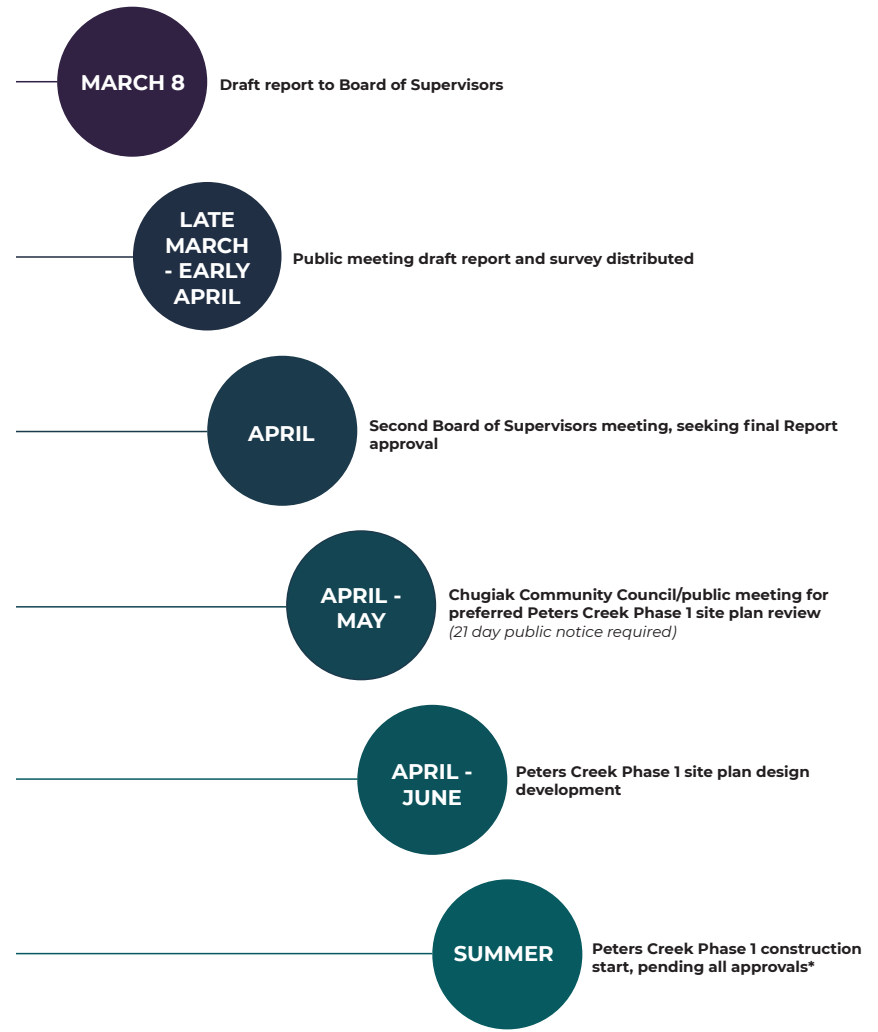
This report compares five sites spanning the Chugiak-Eagle River area and explains the rationale for proposed development at two of the candidate sites.

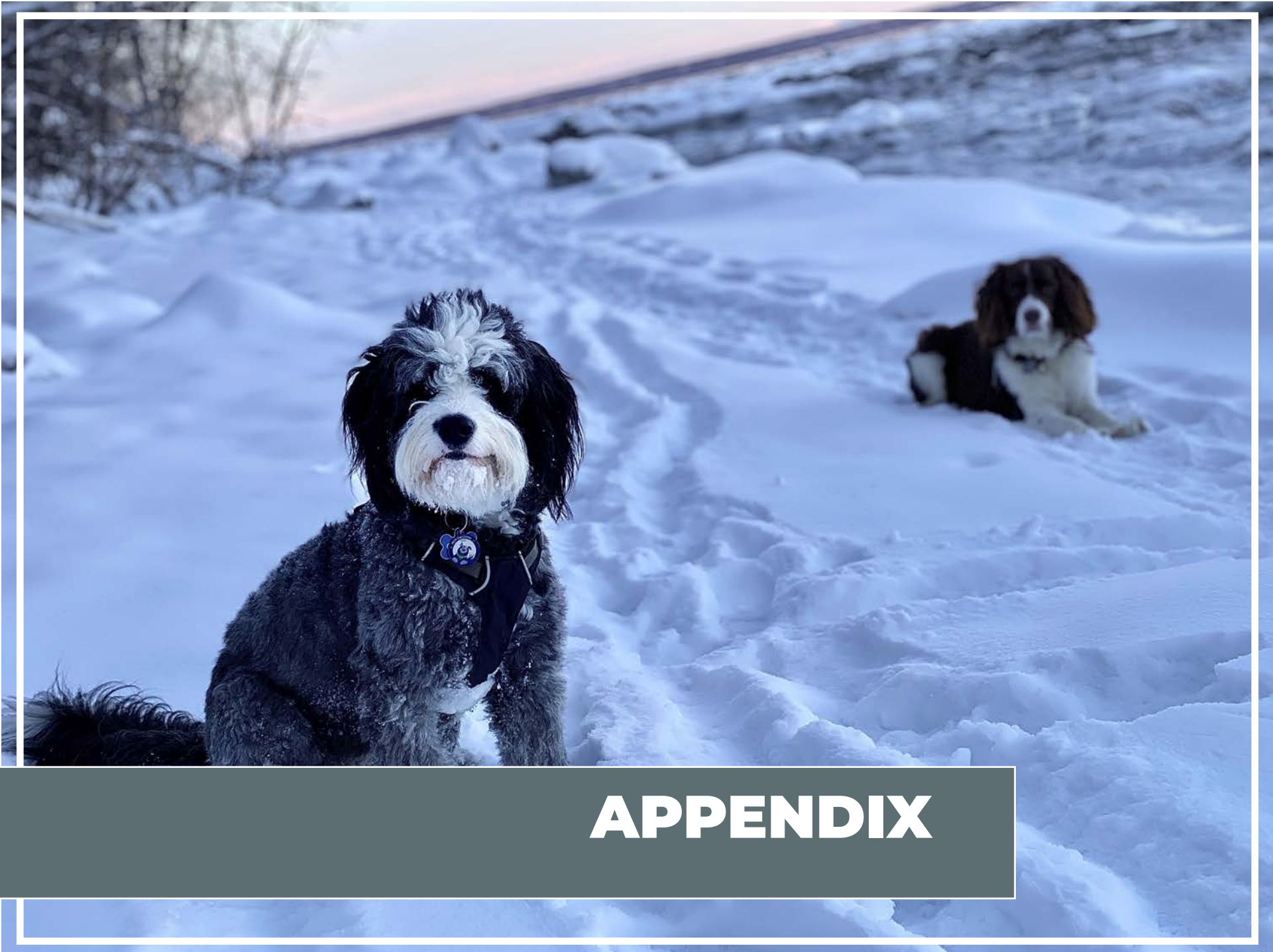
- **Priority 1: Peters Creek Park.** A community-use dog park in sections of Peters Creek Park would meet a need that exists today and prepare the park for increased positive use as the residential population grows. The south section is proposed as Phase I with options to expand throughout the park.
- **Priority 2: Fire House Lane Park.** Once a community-use park is established, a neighborhood dog park at the existing Fire House Lane Park would serve local Eagle River downtown core residents and meet the demand for fenced dog parks within Eagle River.

With the continuation of thoughtful design development, dog parks facilities will become cherished park assets that support the balance of natural and urban amenities in Chugiak-Eagle River, improving the overall quality of life for all residents.

2021 TIMELINE

A timeline below reviews key milestones for this project and the estimated date to complete each task.





APPENDIX



APPENDIX A: SITE CRITERIA MATRIX

The following criteria matrix gives ratings to the sites related to the criteria described in this report. It is adapted from a draft report compiled by R&M Consultants for the Municipality of Anchorage in 2018.

SUMMARY OF SITE CRITERIA COMPARISON

SITE #	PARK	TOTAL SCORE	SUMMARY
1	Fire House Lane Park	30	Once sidewalks are developed in the area, Fire House Lane Park is an opportunity for a central, walkable dog park in the Eagle River Core and would be low cost to develop. Buffering and design can mitigate concerns with nearby land use (residential and elementary school).
2	Loretta French Park	23	This site has many competing uses that may conflict with an added dog park.
3	Beach Lake Park	21	While an existing master plan recommends a dog park for this site, the lack of existing parking, competing uses (especially dog mushing) and the railroad corridor alignment are major challenges.
4	Peters Creek Park	27	This site is an opportunity for a community-use dog park with no known competing uses. It will require some resources to mitigate the concerns of buffering, parking, and maintenance.
5	NW 1/4 of Section 25	22	This site lacks parking and utilities. A community vision for the entire park should be determined through future planning and community outreach before considering a dog park facility in the area.



SCORING CRITERIA: TABLE 1 OF 2

#	PARK	Adjacent Zoning	Adjacent Land Use	Site or Master Plan	Utilities	Compatible with Environment	Neighborhood Traffic, Access, Parking	Pedestrian Access
1	Fire House Lane Park 16631 Eagle River Rd., Eagle River	PLI (Public Lands and Institutions), CE-R1A (Single Family Residential), CE-B3 (General Business)	Elementary school, single-family homes	No existing plan	On site	Lower elevation of site is wooded area with existing social trails	Small 6-car parking lot on property, walking access from Eagle River core is high	Highly walkable from downtown core, pending future sidewalk improvements scheduled on neighborhood streets
		2	2	0	3	3	3	3
2	Loretta French Park 18100 Old Glenn Hwy, Chugiak	PLI and CE-B3	Archery and equestrian facilities; RC aircraft	Existing plan	On site	Open area grass field already cleared, heavily programmed by other users in proximity to current site.	Parking lots and a paved multi-use path along Old Glenn Hwy. for neighborhood access.	Separated pathway along Old Glenn Hwy., but > 5 miles from Eagle River Core
		2	1	0	3	1	3	1
3	Beach Lake Park Beach Lake Rd. and S. Birchwood Loop Rd, Chugiak	CE-R5A Rural Residential with Mobile Homes	Railroad corridor; residential	3 - Master Plan recommends dog park	2 - not on site, but trail lights on other side of road	1 - Area of moose activity; two settlement ponds that serve as waterfowl habitats; ARRC corridor is in conflict	1 - Current parking at new cross country ski trailhead, not on site. Accessing the ARRC corridor is prohibited, but not prevented.	No sidewalks or separated pathways on S Birchwood Loop Rd.
		2	1	3	2	1	1	1
4	Peters Creek Park 3900 Abbott Road, Chugiak	PLI, CE-R7 (Medium-Density Single Family Residential) and CE-R6 (Low-Density Residential)	Residential properties will require buffering	No existing plan	Close proximity	Historically disturbed site with mature forest and over-grown understory, no wetlands	No parking facilities exist, neighbors park on Lace Rd. and Hunter Dr.	Multi-use path from existing disc golf parking to north about 1/4 mile walk; site is within Chugiak Community residential area
		2	1	0	3	3	3	2
5	NW 1/4 of Section 25 west of S. Birchwood Loop Road	PLI and CE-R6 (Low Density Residential)	Large-lot residential with an existing mature vegetation buffer	Master Plan recommends dog park in different location	Not on site	Type A wetlands present in the northwest (near existing established trail loop), could be mitigated through permitting	Current parking is informal on-street parking on residential streets: Hillcrest Dr., Pioneer Dr., Almdale Ave."	Walkable only for nearby residences, but no sidewalks in neighborhood or S Birchwood Loop Rd.
		2	2	2	0	1	1	1

0 - INCOMPATIBLE 1 - LOW COMPATIBILITY 2 - MODERATE COMPATIBILITY 3 - HIGH COMPATIBILITY



SCORING CRITERIA: TABLE 2 OF 2

#	PARK	Topography	Drainage/Flooding	Fences/Natural Barriers	Development Costs (1=\$\$\$, 3=\$)	Maintenance & Management (1=high, 3=low)
1	Fire House Lane Park 16631 Eagle River Rd., Eagle River	Slightly lower elevation to west offers varied trail experience	No standing water on site; there is a drainage swale along south side.	Fence around tennis court could be partially used; existing vegetative barriers between commercial and residential uses act as noise buffer	Completing chain link fence; gates; new signage/amenities, drainage; soft surface trails	Existing parking provides easy access to amenities; natural wooded site = minimal upkeep.
		3	2	3	3	3
2	Loretta French Park 18100 Old Glenn Hwy, Chugiak	Mostly flat terrain with opportunities for hill trails	No known issues with drainage	Surrounded by residential, with dense landscape buffer around park perimeter; vegetation and terrain grade changes around perimeter of park	Construction of new chain link fence; additional signage; buffering from adjacent uses; depending on design outcome a new turf area may be needed	Existing parking provides easy access to amenities; new turf area would require regular mowing.
		2	3	3	3	1
3	Beach Lake Park Beach Lake Rd. and S. Birchwood Loop Rd, Chugiak	Variation in vegetation, from wooded areas, grassy areas and relatively flat terrain. ARRC corridor is an incompatible use.	No known issues with drainage	3-vegetation and terrain grade changes around perimeter of park; few residences, but with dense landscape buffer on park perimeter	Planning/design; Construction of new chain link fence; parking lot, lights, signage; soft surface trails, grading	Once parking is built, easy access for maintaining; natural wooded site = minimal upkeep.
		1	3	3	1	2
4	Peters Creek Park 3900 Abbott Road, Chugiak	Varied terrain with remnants of old road; selective vegetation removal could result in partially cleared, flat areas. Site has expansive views from ridge above Lace Rd., vegetation variety, and interesting topography	No standing water on site; there is a low area with plant species indicative of wetter soils. Drainage issues associated with residential drive east end of parcel resolved with maintenance from CBERRRSA	Vegetation and terrain grade changes around perimeter of park; near residences, but with dense landscape buffer on park perimeter	Construction of new chain link fence; parking lot, lights, signage; soft surface trails	Once parking is built, easy access for maintaining; natural wooded site = minimal upkeep.
		3	2	3	2	3
5	NW 1/4 of Section 25 west of S. Birchwood Loop Road	Steep slopes on southwest ridge, ARRC corridor may require buffering. Site has expansive views, vegetation variety, and interesting topography	No known issues with drainage	Vegetation and terrain grade changes around perimeter of park; near residences, but with dense landscape buffer on park perimeter	Planning/design; Construction of new chain link fence; parking lot, lights, signage; soft surface trails, grading	Once parking is built, easy access for maintaining; natural wooded site = minimal upkeep.
		1	3	3	1	3

0 - INCOMPATIBLE

1 - LOW COMPATIBILITY

2 - MODERATE COMPATIBILITY

3 - HIGH COMPATIBILITY



MINIMUM CRITERIA

#	PARK	Total Park Area	Open Space Area	MOA Parkland	Zoning	Existing Uses/Description
1	Fire House Lane Park 16631 Eagle River Rd., Eagle River	1.8 acres	0.75 acre	Yes	CE-R2M Mixed Residential	Tennis court, 1/2 acre wooded lot with social trails that connect to adjacent school to north
2	Loretta French Park 18100 Old Glenn Hwy, Chugiak	25 acres	2 acres existing fenced baseball field, possible repurpose	Yes	PLI Public Lands and Institutions	Five ball fields (permitted), concession stand, restrooms, skate park, varied terrain with hill with hiking trails, playground, equestrian area, Remote Control (RC) plane area
3	Beach Lake Park Beach Lake Rd. and S. Birchwood Loop Rd, Chugiak	7.8 acres	Roughly 2.2 acres of partially-cleared and heavily wooded area	Yes	PLI	Partially cleared in railroad right-of-way, heavily forested with large trees everywhere else. Dog sled trails to the west, Nordic ski trails to the south, neighboring equestrian residential development to the northeast. Railroad corridor bisects site.
4	Peters Creek Park 3900 Abbott Road, Chugiak	50 acres	6.7 acres (south site), not cleared	Yes	PLI	Undeveloped in south section; middle section is programmed for disc golf, summer wedding rentals in picnic shelter, open field and picnic area, trails
5	NW 1/4 of Section 25 west of S. Birchwood Loop Road	1,750	No cleared space	Yes	PLI and CE-R6 (Low Density Residential)	Railroad diagonally traverses this area. Mostly undeveloped woodland except lighted Hill Loop Trail.



