

November 7, 2006

Dear Citizens,

Thank you again for your participation in our efforts to identify an appropriate site for an off leash area in the Queen Anne and Magnolia neighborhoods. I have reviewed all the materials submitted thus far in this process, and I concur with the Board of Park Commissioners' recommendation to establish pilot off-leash areas at Lower Kinnear Park and Magnolia Manor Park. The Board also recommended that we start a process to examine the feasibility of a pilot off-leash area in the Bay Terrace Road area in Discovery Park, which is in the northeast corner of the park and not included in the area covered by the master plan.

As you probably know, five sites were recommended by representatives of the Queen Anne and Magnolia communities. Staff then narrowed these five sites down to three, and the Board of Park Commissioners held a public hearing regarding these sites on October 12, 2006. At their next meeting on October 26, the Board recommended to me the actions summarized above.

In order to establish a new pilot site, a local stewardship committee must be formed under the auspices of Citizens for Off Leash Areas (COLA) and an agreement between Parks and COLA signed. Magnolia Manor Park will also require approval from the Seattle Public Utilities. Parks staff will monitor the performance of the agreement during the 18-month pilot period, consistent with Parks' practices for other pilot off-leash areas.

During the pilot period, parks will inspect the sites and monitor usage, noise, materials, condition of the site, and impacts on the community. As the Parks Superintendent, I have the authority under Chapter 18.12.080 of the Seattle Municipal Code to temporarily or permanently close or modify the boundaries of an off leash area for reasons such as excessive environmental damage or serious unanticipated problems affecting neighboring residents or other park users.

Our next steps in this process will be for our staff to work on providing plans and cost estimates during the next few months and then seek funding to implement these two off-leash area improvements. Parks staff also will involve Animal Control, COLA representatives and park neighbors in the preparation of a maintenance agreement for both the Lower Kinnear Park and Magnolia Manor Park sites. These efforts will allow us to address concerns that citizens may have on the use of these sites as off-leash areas.

Thank you for your participation in this process, and I hope that you will continue to give us your input as we move forward to meet the need for off-leash areas in Queen Anne and Magnolia.

Sincerely,

Kenneth R. Bounds
Superintendent