

Peninsula Dog PAC Questionnaire

1. Do you have a dog? If so, where are your favorite places to walk your dog?



Please meet our tri-color Collie, Chloe (2000-2014). She enjoyed a life of international travel and adventures. Sadly, she passed away a few years ago. We hope to get our next dog when the time is right for our family. We loved any new adventures for walking, particularly beautiful open spaces and dog-friendly beaches. She particularly enjoyed walking in Barron Park trails and smelling all the smells near the donkey pasture (though we kept our distance so as not to frighten the donkeys).

2. Palo Alto allows dogs on all trails in open space preserves except weekends and holidays at Foothill Park. Do you believe:

- (a) There should be some off-leash trails.
- (b) Foothill Park should allow dog access on weekends and holidays.
- (b) The amount of off-leash trails (none) and on-leash is just right.
- (c) There should be no off-leash trails and fewer on-leash trails.

Please explain your choice.

(a) Many of Palo Alto's open spaces have a sensitive habitat that is considered unsafe for off-leash dogs, given the mountain lions, coyotes, and other predators in the area. You can also imagine the increase in emergency calls that might be generated by an owner chasing through open space after a dog they cannot control. That said, we should reserve some open spaces for our dogs and dog families to enjoy. We can minimize the risk of runaways by designating certain, possibly fenced, terrain for



off-leash dog use. I have seen this done successfully in Pulgas Ridge and parks outside Denver (see picture of my son, his friend, and his dogs), where off-leash areas are fun and manageable. Safety is paramount to me, and we can plan and design for it.

Speaking of safety, to address (b), Foothills Park can become crowded on weekends and holidays, and dogs are not allowed during those times to minimize confrontations between dogs and other trail users. This will result in better outcomes for dogs and dog owners.

3. Palo Alto has small fenced in off-leash dog areas in Greer Park, Hoover Park and Mitchell Park: Do you believe:

- (a) Additional parks (or more area in these parks) should allow dogs off-leash.**
- (b) This is the right amount of off-leash dog parks for Palo Alto**
- (c) One or more of these parks should no longer allow dogs off-leash.**

Please explain your choice.

- (a) More people have dogs in Palo Alto than ever before. Safe, large, off-leash parks are critical for physical health and socialization. Bigger parks allow for more space, and more safety, for our dogs. I would like us to study the feasibility in creating at least one new off-leash dog park. We do not have a dog park south of El Camino or north of east of Oregon Expressway, meaning quite a few residents do not have easy access. An additional option I'd like to consider is a dog park like that at San Antonio Center in Mountain View, where a small but very modern dog park was added in as a community benefit by a developer.

4. There is a proposal to test off-leash hours at two Palo Alto parks (other than the fenced in dog run areas at Mitchell, Greer and Hoover parks). Do you support this proposal? Do you support the overall concept of limited off-leash hours at some Palo Alto parks? Please elaborate.

Yes, I support this as a pilot program, and ask that we collect community feedback on the pilot (establish success criteria and measure the pilot against those criteria). Similar ideas are successfully adopted in communities around us. I would like to make sure limited hours include a morning and evening block, to help with accessibility for people on different schedules.

5. Do you believe there are Palo Alto parks, trails and open space that should no longer permit dogs on-leash? Please elaborate.

No. At this time, I have not heard demands to consider this. Palo Alto dog owners and dog walkers are generally very responsible and respectful. If we have issues in an area, such as dog waste, I want to provide educational signs and disposal facilities before moving to ban dog walking. Other controls, like a ban on flexi-leashes, should also help maintain safe areas for all.

6. Is there anything else you would like voters to know about your position on recreational dog walking access?

Dogs are important to Palo Altans and to me. We need to create and maintain adequate, appropriate spaces to meet their needs, and to protect everyone's interest. More and larger areas increase safety and improve the quality of life for dog owners. Walking your dogs is also a great way to meet neighbors!

Cari Templeton

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Sept. 11, 2020

Printed Name

Signature

Date

Thank you for answering these questions. We plan on putting your answers on our website to make it easy for your constituents to view your positions.