

23 Tails, Inc.

# Community Dog Park Proposal



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## INTRODUCTION

Hello,

My name is Rori Erickson, and I am the Director of 23 Tails, Inc. We are a non-profit organization founded with the goal of building a dog park in our community. Our interests lie in leasing several acres to use as an off-leash area for dogs and more specifically, for the betterment of both humans and their companions.

***Healthy people, healthy communities, and healthy pets share a commonality. Staying active! This is an opportunity to truly enrich our quality of life in Albion.***

## WHY SHOULD WE BUILD ONE?

As of February of this year Forbes reports that 56% of Americans have a dog in their household, and in rural areas that number jumps to 65%. In a community of our size, that is a lot of dogs and a lot of people needing a safe space to engage with their pets. In addition, dog parks aren't just great for the pups; they're also beneficial for humans.

## DOG PARKS PROMOTE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Dog parks offer a fantastic opportunity for owners to engage in physical activity with their furry companions. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, aiming for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise per week is recommended. Playing with your sweet pooch at the dog park is an enjoyable way to fulfill these exercise guidelines. More specifically, our park would include an interior walking path for those looking to get some steps in while their dog explores the area.

Building a dog park offers a safe and engaging space for dog owners to bond with their pets while ensuring their dogs get the necessary exercise. No more backyard bathroom breaks – it's time to play and walk together!

## **DOG PARKS ENCOURAGE A HEALTHY AND ACTIVE LIFESTYLE**

Choosing the dog park over the backyard promotes an active environment for both humans and dogs. A more active lifestyle starts with a single step, and the park could be a gateway for many who have fallen into a dormant lifestyle. By embracing a more active lifestyle, we can enjoy numerous health benefits. Having an active dog is linked to lower cholesterol, improved heart health (like lower risks for heart disease), enhanced mental well-being, and a stronger immune system.

***Seniors can utilize a safe enclosed space to walk, free of traffic, bicycles, and other impediments. Utilization of the park will surely increase happiness and promote good health in our community members.***

## **DOG PARKS ALLOW FOR SOCIALIZATION & IMPROVED MENTAL HEALTH**

Dog parks are perfect for meeting new people and staying in touch with friends. They allow parkgoers to connect with other dog owners who share a passion for dogs. It's a great way to bond with neighbors and even make new friends.

Dog ownership has also been shown to impact mental health in the following ways: reducing stress and anxiety, combatting loneliness, encouraging engagement with others, promoting social connections, and increased self-

esteem due to the unconditional love and companionship dogs offer. **And we know that the correlation between mental health and physical health is inextricably linked.**

## **BUILDING FOR OUR FUTURE**

We created 23 Tails, Inc. to get a dog park built in our community. All of the aforementioned are fantastic reasons to build one, but we are also looking at the draw for younger families to join our beautiful community and make it their home. **Having a dog park is a community feature that many twenty and thirty-somethings consider a valuable asset, with a recent Chamber survey listing it third on a list of desired amenities to Albion.**

***The vitality and continuation to thrive in rural American depends on making our small communities desirable to young and old, alike.***

## THE PROPOSED SITE



## WHAT FACTORS DETERMINE THE SIZE OF THE PARK?

Safety for all parkgoers is of the utmost importance to our organization. Keeping that forefront in our planning, research shows the most successful parks have factored in the following for size consideration:

- Separated areas for small breed dogs and/or senior dogs away from larger or more playful, younger breeds
- Avoidance of overcrowding by allowing room for multiple dogs at any given time
- Keeping the space a manageable enough size to be able to reach your pet within a quick and reasonable amount of time
- Proper entrance gating with a waiting area between the exterior and interior gates
- Accessibility for those with limited mobility

In urban areas, finding a parcel of this size is nearly impossible. We have been blessed with the opportunity to put together something really great here. A parcel that includes ample room for both areas of the park (small/elderly & larger breed), sizable waiting areas, parking, and room down to road to add shade structures, benches, etc.

## WHAT INITIAL CHANGES WOULD BE MADE TO THE SITE?

To achieve a functional, safe space the proposed changes would be required:

- Roadway access from the blacktop
- Parking area with four designated handicap spaces (two adjacent to each section of the gated entrances). White rock parking for the majority and asphalt for the handicap spaces, interior walking path, and entry points
- Four-foot chain-link fencing for parameter and waiting areas/gates
- Tree and wildflower installations

As mentioned earlier, in the future we would like to add shade structures, benches, etc. However, for now this would safely get us up and running.

## NEXT STEPS

If greenlit to proceed, the next stage in our process would be working with City Administration and our Planning Committee to make sure we are adhering to existing codes and regulations and lining up the work.

Many in the community have offered in-kind services for dirt work, installation projects, up-keep, etc. Currently, we have generated enough money to purchase fencing, asphalt, and other preliminary items to get the park off the ground.

## IN CONCLUSION

We kindly ask that you approve the proposed site for our project. Please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns.

Gratefully,



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## NOTES