

RW Park and Hatley Fields

From [REDACTED]
Date Thu 11/13/2025 6:50 PM
To Makayla Rodriguez <mrodriguez@rollingwoodtx.gov>; Alun Thomas <athomas@rollingwoodtx.gov>

Makayla- Please distribute to Council, Parks and RCDC.

Dear Mayor, Council, Parks and RCDC:

I am a twenty-year resident of Rollingwood who has served on Planning and Zoning Commission, Parks Commission (2 times) and lead the fundraising and improvement efforts to build the Field House. During the last twenty years I have watched as our park and fields have evolved and usage by the community has changed. I believe now is a pivotal time for our Park and Fields to continue moving forward to allow our Rollingwood community to make better use of all our shared open spaces.

I urge Council, RCDC and Parks to finally pave and improve the front and right parking areas along Rollingwood Dr. These improvements are long overdue. The parking area on the other side of the fields has proven to be a successful and well used improvement even after great debate amongst community members years ago. I do not believe grass parking at the north end of the park is the best use of space. There are only a handful of days per year that would need the overflow parking at the back. Currently it is a preference to be used vs a necessity. Changing the parking structure and drawing community members to the front and side is a better use of space.

As we address parking and trees, we can easily reimagine fields 3,4 and 5 and the north end of the park. By combining these areas, we need to prioritize needs for all members and groups in the community. To be honest, I was adamantly opposed to a dog park years ago. Build it and they will come was what I believed and feared we would become a dog destination filled with poop and pee. We worked to get dogs off the front two fields and tried to figure out how to share the remaining fields. One concern from the Little League at the time was investing in fields that would be used by dogs who would urinate on and tear up the ground. It's not worth the investment in grass, fertilizer and care when the amount of urine in the ground will make it impossible to grow grass because of urine burn.

The usage as an off-leash dog park has increased over time to numbers far greater than our Rollingwood neighborhood. Families still complain about the dog waste; they motivate for a few years to make changes and then as their children age out, they give up and move on. Then a new crop of parents pops up and the cycle continues. I believe it's time to end this cycle and reimagine how we divide up the field and north end of the park allowing more users for multiple purposes.

I believe we need a specific dog park that is fenced in for dogs and owners to use at any time during the day. Adding a specific location allows the city to add seating areas, dog features, trees for shade in the summer heat, etc. that cannot be installed on the current fields. Return the remaining central area to t-ball fields and multiuse space free of animal waste. It does not need to be fully enclosed beyond portions on the parking area side.

As someone who stood before council years ago advocating for bathrooms at the ball fields instead of port o potties, I believe it's time to reexamine how we use the field house. I haven't seen a true concession stand in years and feel it would be a better use of space as a community center styled room with improved outdoor seating and landscaping. We have many groups in the neighborhood who could host activities in a rec style space, imagine senior coffees, community activities like mahjong and bridge groups, scouting meetings, sewing groups, volunteer meetings, etc. By improving the field house, we bring a broader spectrum of users to our park, not just children and dog lovers.

Again, I urge Council to move forward with parking improvements in the front and right side of the park, add the approved trees and begin the process of reimagining how we allocate and use the remaining space. We don't need expensive comprehensive plans and studies that go to waste, we simply need discussion and a landscape architects' eye for space, usage and beauty. It's time for a dog only area, a space where multiple activities can take place free of waste and possibilities for all community members.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Catherine Horne

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