



AGENDA ITEM

Mirror Dog Park

March 26, 2020

BACKGROUND

Since 2017, the Mirror Community Network has been coordinating the use of the west ball diamond in Mirror as an off leash dog park, on a temporary basis. Administration has been working with this group to develop a permanent solution and location for the park.

At the January 30, 2020 Council meeting, the following motion was carried:

Moved by Mrs. Knight that the County Manager be directed to prepare a report with regard to the request from the Mirror Community Network for in-kind labour, year-round access, maintenance and occasional winter snow removal for the proposed Mirror off-leash dog park.

This motion was in regard to a presentation to Council by Danielle Jefferies, President of the Mirror Community Network. Mr. Jefferies proposed two locations for a permanent off leash dog park, as well as a request for labour to install fencing and maintain the park on a year round basis.

ANALYSIS

The existing temporary Dog Park located within the west ball diamond in Mirror has been operating just of two years. Lacombe County has been working with the users of the park and the Mirror Community Network in its operation. To date we have received very few concerns by the public or other users of this area. The biggest concern being the loss of the use of the ball diamond. Although this has not been a huge concern recently, it is felt that in time and as usage of the ball diamonds increases the loss of the facility will impact future tournaments and gatherings.

Data collected from the users of the dog park show that usage has increased to approximately 23 known local users. They also report that the Village of Alix dog walkers bring dogs from Saving Grace Animal Rescue to use the facilities. They believe there are other users of the park from outside the Hamlets borders but are unsure of these numbers.



Current services provided by the County include mowing within the park compound, snow plowing of the parking area and emptying of garbage. These services have been incorporated within the existing maintenance the County provides in and around the ball park and campground.

The presentation and request from the Mirror Community Network included the following:

- That Council consider and approve a permanent location for a dog park in Mirror.
- Lacombe County install the required fences and gates.
- Lacombe County maintain access to the park year round, which includes mowing the grass during summer months, and occasional snow clearing during the winter months on pathways within the park.
- Plowing of snow for the parking area as required.
- Regular garbage removal.

The two locations presented to Council were: the east side of the east ball diamond and the east side of the field located at the Christian School (as shown in the attached aerial photo).

East side of the east ball diamond

Pros

- County owned land.
- Can incorporate existing fence, half the fence would already be installed (this is similar to what is found at the Christian School).
- Central location to public amenities - public ball diamonds, campground, washrooms.

Cons

- No established parking and a parking lot would need to be considered.
- Proximity to public users of other facilities, especially during large events.

East side of the Christian School Field

Pros

- Can incorporate existing fence, half the fence would already be installed (this is similar to what is found at the ball diamonds).
- Existing parking large enough to separate school users and park users.
- Provide incidental benefits to school by way of services such a mowing and snow plowing.
- Greater separation between park users and public.



Cons

- The County does not own the land and a long term lease agreement would be required. (preliminary consultation was had with the land owner and the Christian School and no issues were identified and all parties support this if this location were chosen.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Deny the request for the construction of a permanent Dog Park.
2. Approve the location and operation of a Dog Park at the Mirror Christian School.
3. Approve the location and operation of a Dog Park at the east side of the east ball diamonds.
4. Other action(s) as determined by Council.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The Mirror Community Network has committed \$3,500 towards the cost of the project.

The anticipated total capital costs to establish the dog park are \$7,750.00 of which Lacombe County's contribution would be \$4,250.00.

There are no additional operating costs associated with the proposed park.

LEGISLATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

Municipal Government Act: Section 3 – The purpose of a municipality are

- (a) to provide good government,
- (b) to provide services, facilities or other things that, in the opinion of council, are necessary for all or a part of the municipality, and
- (c) to develop and maintain safe and viable communities

STRATEGIC PLAN

The following elements of the County's Strategic Plan are relevant to this issue:

Our Vision: An attractive, balanced and progressive community.

Our Mission: To build a safe and vibrant community through leadership, innovation and healthy relationships.

Key Principles: Recognizing our history and solid foundation, we approach the



role of providing the best possible level of municipal services for our citizens through a base of collaborative and supportive teamwork.

Strategic Priority: Pursue more recreational opportunities.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Lacombe County sees the value in engaging and informing the public/stakeholders through a variety of mediums as outlined in the *Policy AD(40): Public Participation Policy*. The appropriate level of engagement for each public participation opportunity is selected on a project-to-project basis. For this item the following engagement will take place:

- *Involve: To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure the public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.*

Highlights of all County Council meetings are published on the County Website and in the County News. Additionally, all policies are publicly available on the County Website. The Mirror Community Network has been actively involved in the development of these options to satisfy their requirements.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve the following resolution:

Council approve the construction and operation of a permanent Dog Park facility in Mirror and that its location be at the Mirror Christian School and further, funding for the project come from the Operational Reserve.

PREPARED BY: Bill Cade, Director of Operations

REVIEWED BY: Tim Timmons, County Manager