

# TOONERVILLE TROLLEY DOG RUN MASTER PLAN



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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Introduction**..... Page 1

**About Toonerville Trolley Park** ..... Page 1

**Project History** ..... Page 1

**Why Old Louisville Needs a Dog Run**..... Page 2

**Dog Run Alternatives**..... Page 3

**Alternative 1** ..... Page 4

**Alternative 2** ..... Page 5

**Alternative 3** ..... Page 6

**Cost Analysis** ..... Page 7

**About the Louisville Dog Run Association**..... Page 8

**About the Toonerville Trolley Neighborhood Association** ..... Page 8

**Conclusion**..... Page 8

**Photos** ..... Page 9

**Appendix**..... Page 11

## Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for the establishment of an off-leash dog run area in Toonerville Trolley Park. The document explains why a dog run is needed in the area and provides three alternatives for the location and design of a dog run.

## About Toonerville Trolley Park

Toonerville Trolley Park was incorporated into the Metro Parks' system in 1978. It is located on the eastern edge of the Old Louisville neighborhood at the intersection of Brook and Oak streets. It is a small urban park, covering approximately two acres with a majority of the park tucked in the center of the surrounding houses. There is currently a small playground and a tennis court in the park.



*Aerial photo courtesy of LOJIC*

## Project History

In the spring of 2008, members of the Toonerville Trolley Neighborhood Association (TTNA) contacted the Louisville Dog Run Association (LDRA) regarding the possibility of establishing a dog run area in Toonerville Trolley Park. After visiting the site and meeting with the TTNA representatives, the LDRA agreed to provide support and assist with the development of a plan for the area.

Throughout the summer of 2008, Jodi Bessinger from the TTNA visited with each individual neighborhood association within the Old Louisville Neighborhood. Meeting after meeting, the neighborhood associations expressed their support for the proposed dog run project (official letters of support are included in the appendix of this report). Here is a timeline and summary of those meetings:

- June 17, 2008 – Jerry Brown from Metro Parks and Brian Davis from the Louisville Dog Run Association visited the Toonerville Trolley Neighborhood Association meeting to discuss the general idea with the group. Jodi Bessinger discussed her plans for visiting other neighborhood associations within Old Louisville.
- August 3, 2008 - Meeting with 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Neighborhood Assoc. They were in support of the proposed dog run.
- August, 2008 - Meeting with 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Neighborhood Association. They support the proposed dog run.

- September 10, 2008 - Meeting with Central Park West Neighborhood Association. They provided a letter of support and were in favor of the proposed dog run.
- September 28, 2008 - Meeting with Old Louisville Neighborhood Council. Council stated they would submit a letter of support for the proposed dog run.
- October 13, 2008 - Meeting with Garvin Gate Neighborhood Association. GGNA stated they supported the proposed dog run and would submit a letter.
- October 20, 2008 – Meeting with 4<sup>th</sup> Street Neighborhood Association. The association said they were in support of the idea and would submit a letter.
- October 29, 2008 – The Courier-Journal ran an article about the proposed dog run and the work that Jodi Bessinger has done.

In addition to the meetings, an article about the proposed dog run has been published in the TTNA Newsletter and distributed around the neighborhood. The Old Louisville Neighborhood Council recently included this article in their newsletter which is distributed to the entire Old Louisville area.

### **Why Old Louisville Needs a Dog Run**

The Old Louisville area is an ideal setting for an urban dog run. The small lots and number of multi-resident structures add to

the need for a dog run for area dog owners to use. The city's leash laws prohibit dog owners from legally playing in Central Park, and the closest official off-leash dog run area is the Cochran Hill Dog Run in Cherokee Park (there are currently 25 registered users who live in Old Louisville).

The following points outline why a dog run would be a positive addition to the Old Louisville neighborhood.

#### Makes Good Use of Underutilized Park Space

There are current green areas of Metro Parks in Old Louisville that go underutilized. Bringing a dog run to one of these areas would ensure that our parks are being used by local citizens and would encourage more ownership for the care and use of the parks green space.



*Photo courtesy of LDRA*

Promotion of Public Safety

Designated spaces for dogs and their owners reduces the likelihood that dogs will be let loose in other recreational areas where they could infringe on the rights of other park users.

A Safer Surrounding Area

Dog owners have an interest in the safety of their community and can act as a neighborhood watch. Also, designated off-leash spaces reduce the resources law enforcement and animal control officials must spend on enforcing leash laws, allowing of them to devote their time to other areas of crime prevention and animal cruelty investigations. Dog runs also make it difficult for illegal activities to occur simply because of the traffic created with dog owners and their dogs.



*Photo courtesy of LDRA*

Creates a Social Hub for Communities

Dogs often help people break the ice, allowing people who share interests to socialize while exercising their dogs. These interactions help neighbors to get to know each other and to build a sense of community. The social aspect of the dog run also tends to enforce the basic rules of dog ownership such as cleaning up after one's dog and always controlling one's dog's behavior. The area would provide a centralized location and help meet the special need of our community.

Promotes Responsible Behavior and Quiet Neighbors

Dogs that are not exercised often become restless, anxious and bark. These dogs are often not socialized with other dogs and strangers. This can cause aggression out in the community. Dog runs offer areas where dogs can socialize with other dogs and their owners. One primary goal of owners is to socialize and run their dogs. Tired dogs are quiet dogs and often more social dogs.

**Dog Run Alternatives**

With the compact nature of the park, there are relatively few alternatives for placing a dog run in Toonerville Trolley Park. The Louisville Dog Run Association and Toonerville Trolley Neighborhood Association have come up with three possible locations for a dog run in the park.

## ALTERNATIVE 1

Alternative 1 places a dog run at the rear of the park on the grassy area that appears to have once been a ball field. The enclosed area would be approximately 26,250 square feet (0.6 acres) and would either be entirely grass or work could be done to provide some crushed limestone or decomposed granite surface areas.



**ALTERNATIVE 2**

Alternative 2 incorporates the existing tennis court into the off-leash dog run area. The tennis facilities at Central Park are only a half mile away, so people interested in playing tennis could go there.

A 110 foot by 120 foot area could be added to the end of the court, giving the dog run area approximately 26,400 square feet (0.6 acres). This alternative would also provide dog owners with the option of having their dogs play on the existing surface or grass.



**ALTERNATIVE 3**

Alternative 3 shifts the location of the proposed dog run to the narrow strip of land near the piece of the park that extends towards Brook Street. This alternative is similar to the original urban dog runs in cities like New York and Chicago. The area would be approximately 45 feet by 140 feet and have an area of approximately 6,000 square feet (0.14 acres). The fence along Brook Street would be lined up with the existing house fronts to maintain the street setback. This alternative would require an alternative surface because grass most likely would not be able to handle the everyday wear and tear.





**Cost Analysis**

There are some standard items would be needed regardless of which alternative is selected. Here is a list of those items.

Item	Cost
Dogipot bag dispensers (2)	\$130.00
Dogipot trash can	\$63.00
Signage	\$350.00
Gate lock system	\$750.00
Benches (2)	\$1,300.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,593.00</b>

The proposed cost to construct the Toonerville Trolley Dog Run varies greatly because of the varying sizes of the alternatives. Another factor in the construction estimate is the aesthetic quality of the fence material to enclose the dog run area. The three existing dog run areas all use a five-foot tall, black vinyl-coated chainlink fence. Because of the historic character of the Old Louisville neighborhood, the Toonerville Trolley Neighborhood Association has requested that there also be an estimate using black ornamental iron, which is very prevalent in the neighborhood.

The following table lists the construction cost estimate for each of the alternatives. The top number in the Fence and Total columns represents the estimate for doing each alternative with a five-foot tall, black vinyl-coated chainlink fence. The bottom number in the Fence and Total columns represents the estimate for doing each alternative with a five-foot tall, black ornamental iron fence.

Alternative	Basic Items	Fence	Total
1	\$2,593	\$8,054	<b>\$10,647</b>
		\$20,084	<b>\$22,677</b>
2*	\$2,593	\$4,902	<b>\$7,495</b>
		\$23,520	<b>\$26,113</b>
3	\$2,593	\$7,841	<b>\$10,434</b>
		\$10,279	<b>\$12,872</b>

\* The chainlink alternative would keep the existing fence around the tennis court; while the wrought iron alternative would replace the existing fence.

Please note these estimates do not include estimates for any ground work that may be needed (like the installation of decomposed granite or crushed limestone) or for the installation of utilities like water and electricity.



Photo courtesy of TTNA

## About the Louisville Dog Run Association

The Louisville Dog Run Association is a 501(c)(3) certified non-profit organization whose purpose is to encourage the establishment of dog runs within our community. The LDRA currently oversees the operation and maintenance of three dog runs: Sawyer Dog Park in E.P. “Tom” Sawyer State Park, Vettiner Dog Run in Charlie Vettiner Park, and the Cochran Hill Dog Run in Cherokee Park. In 2008 the three dog runs combined to have over 2,000 members and over 52,000 daily visits through September.

## About the Toonerville Trolley Neighborhood Association

The Toonerville Trolley Neighborhood Association is a membership organization governed by a Board of Trustees that has as its major responsibilities the formation of goals and implementation of strategies which lead to the betterment of the neighborhood. The boundaries consist of First, Brook and Floyd Streets from Kentucky Street to Hill Street and adjacent cross streets within the Old Louisville Historic District.

## Conclusion

The Toonerville Trolley Neighborhood Association and the Louisville Dog Run Association are interested in establishing a dog run in Toonerville Trolley Park. A dog run would be a positive addition to the park because it would help use underutilized public space, promote public safety, and provide dog owners a place to legally allow their dogs to exercise and socialize off-leash. Start up costs range from \$7,495 to \$10,647 for doing a vinyl-coated chainlink fence, or \$12,872 to \$26,113 using a black ornamental iron. We look forward to

working with Metro Parks to establish a true urban dog run in Toonerville Trolley Park.



*Photo courtesy of LDRA*



*Alternative 1 Area*



*Alternative 1 Area*



*Tennis Court in Alternative 2*



*Area South of Tennis Courts*



*Looking North at Tennis Courts*



*Looking West at Alternative 3 Area*



*Looking East at Alternative 3 Area*