

## Background, Purpose & Need

Off-leash dog parks are one of the fastest growing type of parks across the nation. According to The Trust for Public Land, in its annual survey of the 100 largest cities, the number of dog parks has grown by more than 40% since 2009. The National Recreation and Parks Association’s 2018 Agency Performance Review data shows that 55% of park and recreation agencies now have established dog parks.

The National Pet Owners 2019-20 Survey by the American Pet Products Association reports 67% of U.S. households, or about 85 million families, own a pet. This is up from 56% of U.S. households in 1988, the first year the survey was conducted. With ever-growing dog ownership in American households, park agencies across the country (including Mammoth Lakes) are seeing growing demand for off-leash dog areas.



Dog parks are sought after by pet owners for multiple reasons. They provide socialization for both pets and their owners. They bring people of all walks of life together in a space where they can form bonds and friendships based on their shared love of dogs. For dogs, especially ones whose owners work long hours, regular dog park visits can provide an outlet to expend stored energy. In addition, dog parks provide a contained space for dogs to play, while minimizing environmental issues for the community and health risks for the many children and adults who frequent Town parks and sports fields.

While demand stems from a growing number of individuals owning a pet, the value and benefits of these spaces extend beyond pets and their owners — making a statement about a community’s commitment to offering amenities that attract a richly diverse and active population. As populations grow, and leash laws become more restrictive, many municipalities see dog parks as a way to allow dogs to play without displacing programmed activities on heavily (over) utilized sports fields, infringing on private property, or potentially creating unwanted dog waste on public streets and public lands.

Currently there is no off-leash dog park in Mammoth Lakes or Mono County to serve the approximate 14,000 residents and thousands of year-round visitors.

## The problem

The prevalence of dogs off leash at Shady Rest Park and the overwhelming amount of dog waste is not only a major safety concern for Town staff, but an escalating environmental issue for the community and a significant health risk for the many children and adults who frequent the park. In essence, Shady Rest Park has become the



community's de facto dog park, with many dog owners blatantly ignoring the law and shunning their moral and legal responsibility to keep their dog on a leash and pick up after their pet.

Impacts from dogs off leash and dog waste at all our parks, including the Whitmore Recreation Area, is becoming not only an environmental and health risk, but a safety risk for both owners and their animals.

### **Site Selection – Whitmore Recreation Area**

The Whitmore Recreation Area with its three sports fields, 9-lane polyurethane 400m standard track and full-size synthetic turf currently serves existing residents of Mammoth Lakes and attracts visitors from around Mono County (pop. approx. 14,000), Bishop and throughout California. Because of the lower elevation and diverse recreation amenities, the Whitmore Recreation Area is experiencing increased utilization by MUSD athletic programs, Mono County Little League, AYSO Spring/Fall soccer league, dog agility groups, Mammoth Track Club, and many individuals, groups, and High School/College sports teams from schools throughout the state, including UCLA and Stanford.

Town staff in collaboration with Pawsitively Mammoth and the Recreation Commission, developed a list of park design elements to determine appropriate site(s) for a functional and user-friendly dog park. In addition to design elements, staff also considered access to existing infrastructure, such as parking, restrooms, water, trash, and the ability to add lighting, seating, and fencing with minimal user conflict or cost.

The Whitmore Recreation Area meets or exceeds the majority of the design elements including access and visibility to all county residents which is critical to the success of a sustainable dog park. In addition, a dog park at the Whitmore Recreation Area located adjacent to the Whitmore Animal Shelter will provide complementary uses for both dogs located in the shelter and our many dog owners from throughout the region looking to safely run their dog off leash and not on the sports fields.

### **Benefits of a Dog Park at the Whitmore Recreation Area**

- Conveniently located to serve Mammoth Lakes, Crowley Lake and Mono County residents
- Open for the majority of the year – lower snow levels than Mammoth Lakes
- The site has a large parking area and necessary infrastructure (water, power, etc.)
- Supports existing “attendees” at the Whitmore Recreation looking to safely run their dog(s) off leash
- Enhances existing Whitmore Animal Shelter operations with a fenced, off-leash dog park
- Complementary to existing and popular dog agility programs and events on the sports fields
- Provides a safer “attendant” user experience on the ball fields with the absence of dogs, including the reduction in environmental and health risks (dog waste) for the many children and adults who utilize the sports fields
- Encourages community inclusion, fosters socialization, and improves public safety
- Promotes proper dog ownership, etiquette, pet wellness and an enhanced quality of life
- The Town has an existing shared maintenance and operations agreement with Mono County
- The Town has allocated \$100,000 to the construction of a Dog Park
- The Town was the recipient of a \$50,000 T-Mobile Hometown Grant Award for a community Dog Park

## Proposal

**Park details:** Approximate size 1 acre. Includes 5-6 foot perimeter fencing, Pup Turf – artificial turf (3,000 sq. ft.), benches, dog waste stations, trash receptacles, high-low water fountain to accommodate both dogs and their owners, ADA access, and signage. See proposed, preliminary site plan, Exhibit A - attached.

### **Key Design Elements:**

- Fencing will be installed around the perimeter of the area to prohibit dogs from leaving the area.
- A standard feature is a double-entry gate system with a gated waiting area for the dog and owners to enter, remove the dog's leash and then open the gate to the main off-leash area, reversing the process for exiting. This ensures that "unplanned escapes" will be kept to a minimum as well as allowing for leashing and unleashing in a separate area that allows dog owners to manage the transition into and out of the dog park.
- The park will have separate small and large dog areas. This allows for dogs of different sizes and ages to avoid interacting and limits possible conflicts. Puppies and shy dogs have the opportunity to interact and become familiar with the high level of activity that can occur in a dog park.
- Dog Park rules will be posted prominently at the entrance to the dog park. A successful and well-functioning park needs guidelines that are easy to understand and are located in a visible area to help communicate the expectations of dogs and their owners. The recently adopted Town of Mammoth Lakes ordinance for designated off-leash areas can be reviewed in Exhibit B.

### **Community Support:**

The Town is fortunate to have the support of the following organizations for a community dog park.

- Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce
- Sierra Dog Ventures
- Pawsitively Mammoth
- Mammoth Lakes Recreation
- Mammoth Lakes Police Department

### **References:**

- A. UNLEASHED, Off-leash Dog Park Design Trends & Planning Tips™ playcore.com (<https://www.playcore.com/programs/unleashed>)
- B. NRPA Designing and Managing Innovative Dog Parks (<https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2018/november/designing-and-managing-innovative-dog-parks/>)
- C. NRPA Dog Parks (<https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2018/november/dog-parks/>)
- D. Dog parks 101, 2019, The Trust for Public Land – Center for City Park Excellence ([https://www.tpl.org/sites/default/files/Dog%20Parks%20best%20practices%202019\\_R2.pdf](https://www.tpl.org/sites/default/files/Dog%20Parks%20best%20practices%202019_R2.pdf))
- E. Canine Comforts, Implement Best Practices, Deploy New Ideas in Dog Parks (<https://recmanagement.com/feature/202002FE01/3>)
- F. 2019-2020 APPA National Pet Owners Survey ([https://www.americanpetproducts.org/pubs\\_survey.asp](https://www.americanpetproducts.org/pubs_survey.asp))

Exhibit A  
Conceptual Site Plan





## Exhibit B

### Revised Ordinance

#### **6.12.220 - Designated off-leash areas.**

Notwithstanding anything in this chapter to the contrary, properly licensed and tagged dogs which are not vicious dogs within the meaning of Food and Agriculture Code Section 31603 or potentially dangerous dogs within the meaning of Food and Agriculture Code Section 31602 may be exercised without a leash in the designated areas established by the parks and recreation director or designee subject to the following rules and regulations:

- A. No dog is permitted in the off-leash area unless it is under the care, custody and control of the owner.
- B. Dogs are permitted off-leash in the designated areas only during the posted hours of operation.
- C. All dogs must be vaccinated for rabies and have a current dog license. No dog that is sick, in heat, vicious, potentially dangerous or has previously bitten any person is permitted in the off-leash area.
- D. All dogs must be under the voice control of their owners at all times. The owner must remain present within the off-leash dog area at all times, must carry a leash, and must leash the dog at the first sign of aggression.
- E. The owner must promptly remove and properly dispose of the dog's waste in a waste receptacle. The owner bears full responsibility for filling any holes and repairing damage to the park created by the dog's defecation.
- F. No animals other than dogs are permitted in an off-leash area.
- G. No dog obedience classes may be conducted in an off-leash area.
- H. The use of an off-leash area by a dog and its owner will constitute the owner's agreement to comply with the rules contained in this section as well as those regulations posted by the parks and recreation director or designee with respect to the use of such off-leash areas.
- I. The use of an off-leash area by a dog and its owner will constitute the owner's agreement to protect, indemnify, defend and hold harmless the town from any claim, injury or damage arising from or in connection with such use.
- J. Signage shall be posted by the town at the entrance to any designated off-leash area stating these rules and any applicable hours of operation.

Proposal for  
Town of Mammoth Lakes

Prepared by



10-12-2021  
Job # 104757-01

Mammoth Lakes Community Dog Park



435-760-5103 | [www.gwpark.com](http://www.gwpark.com)



**Mammoth Lakes Community Dog Park-Project 104757-01-Opt 1  
Mammoth Lakes, CA**





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**Mammoth Lakes, CA**





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Mammoth Lakes, CA**



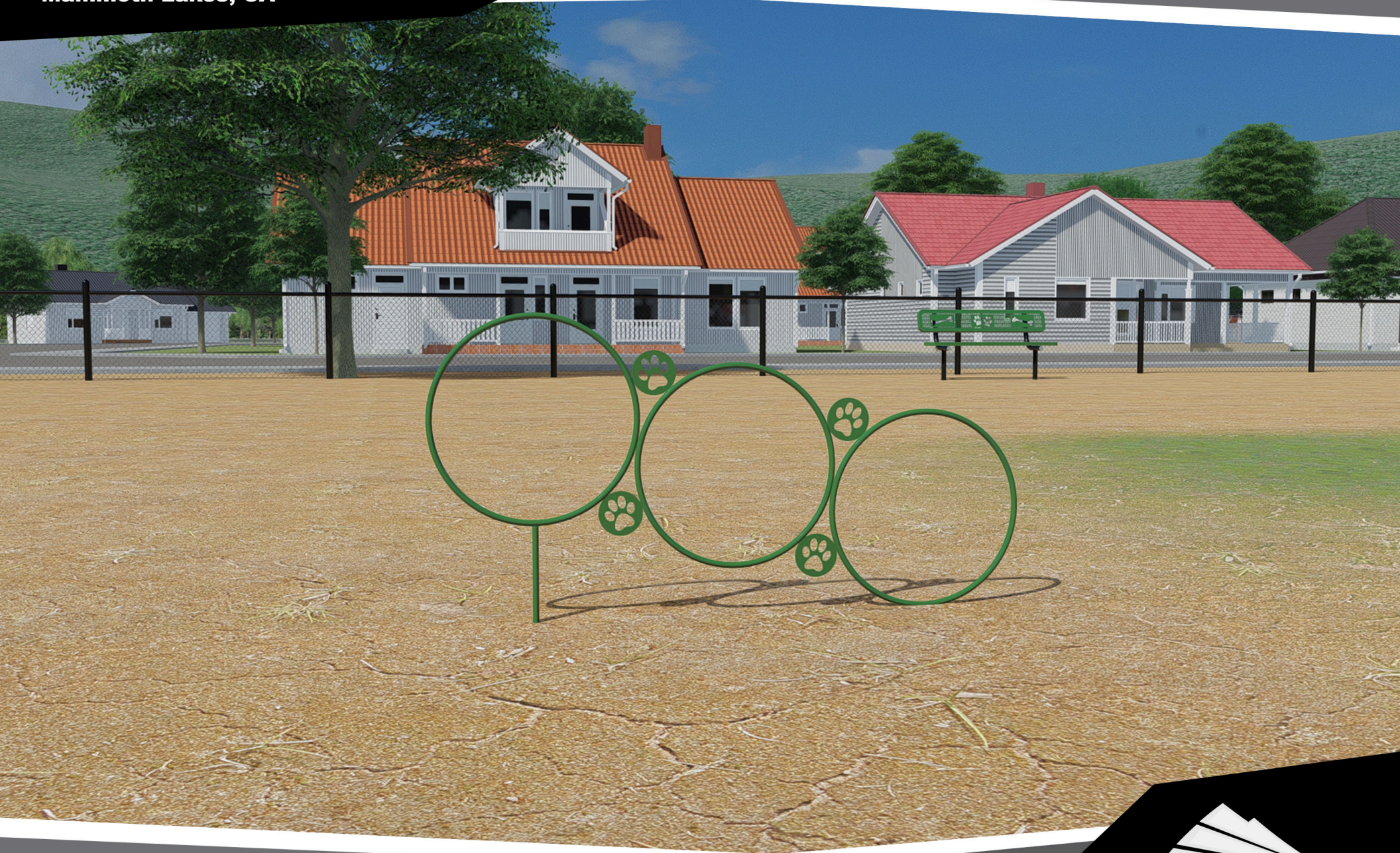


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Mammoth Lakes, CA**



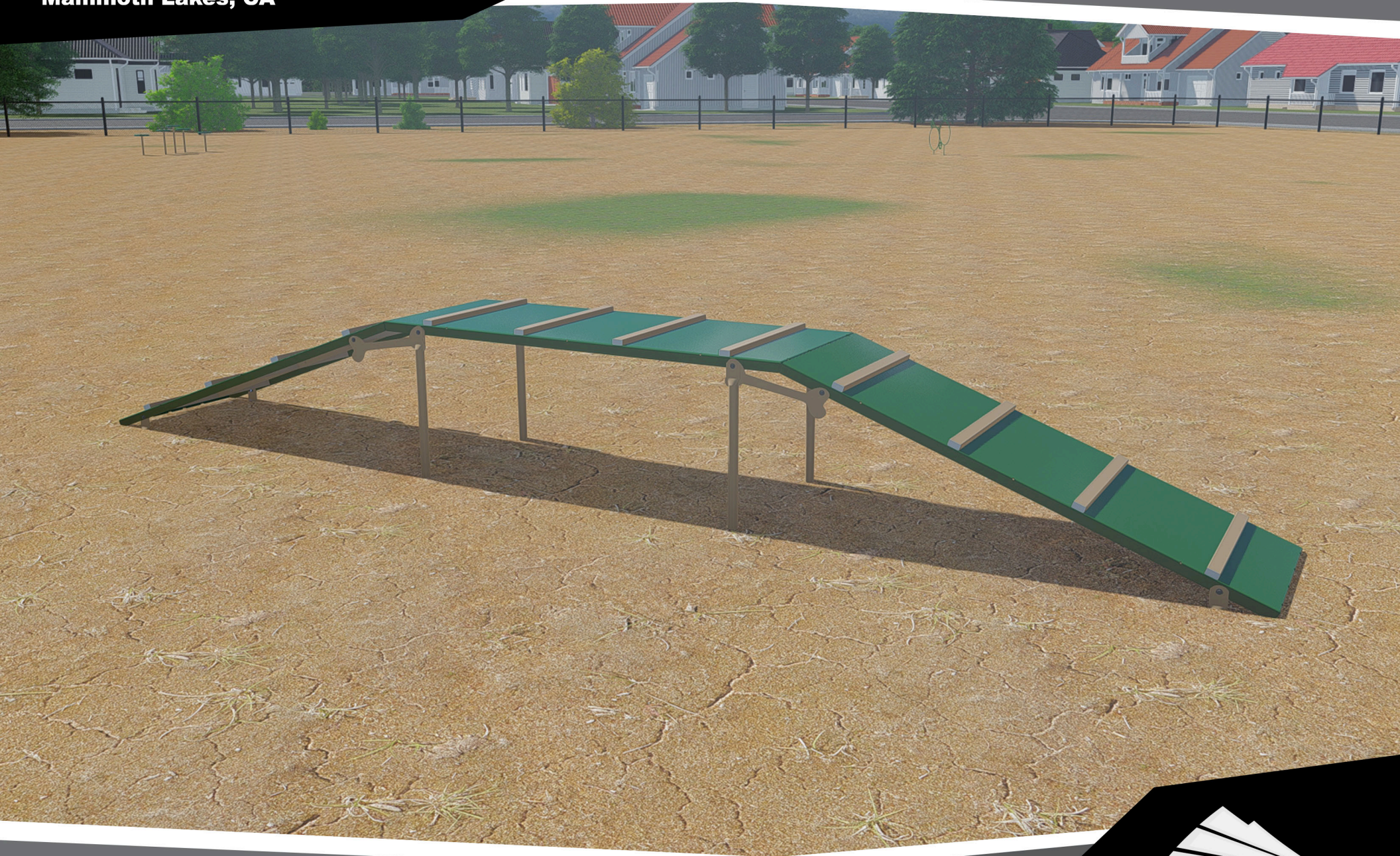


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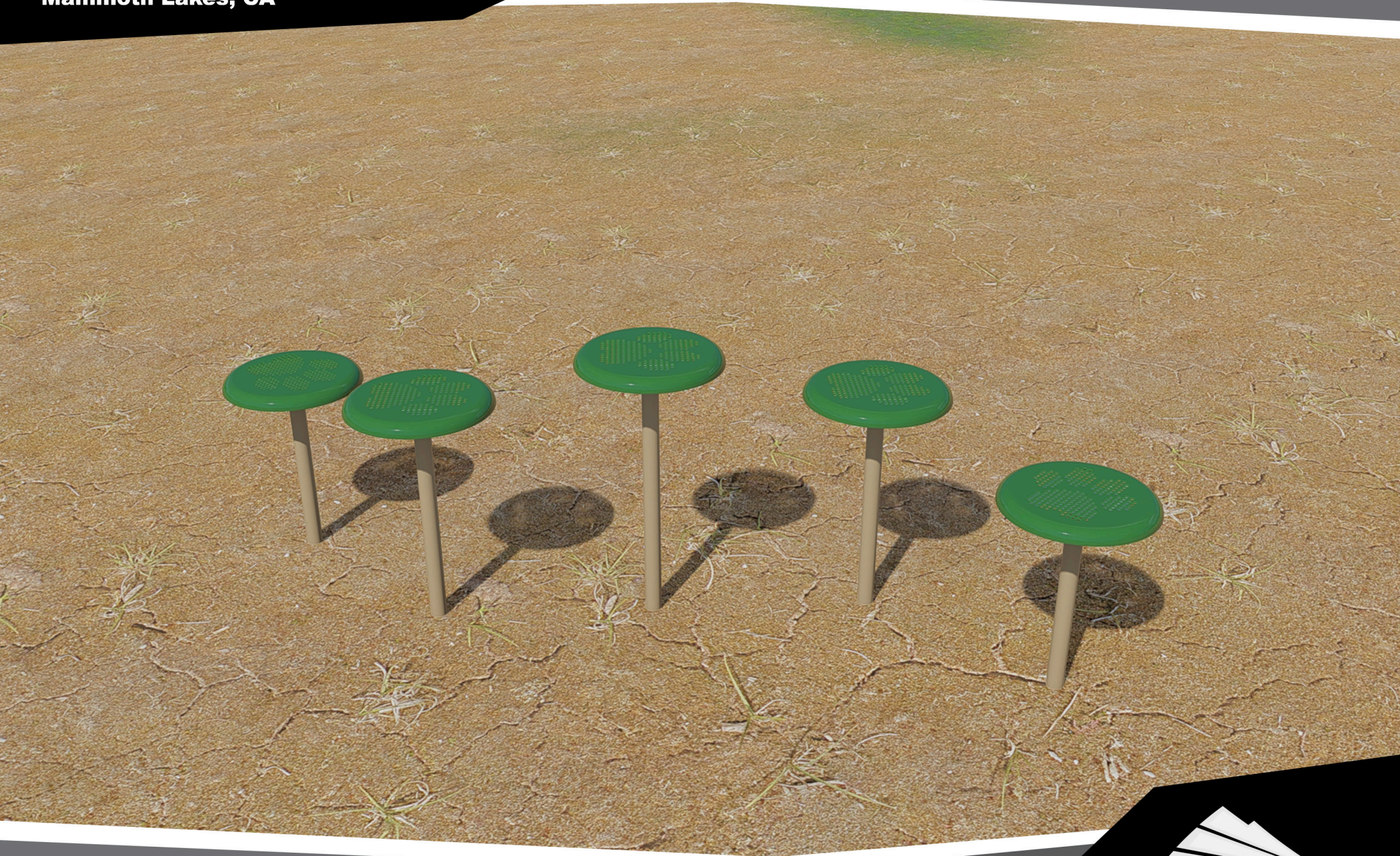


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Mammoth Lakes, CA**



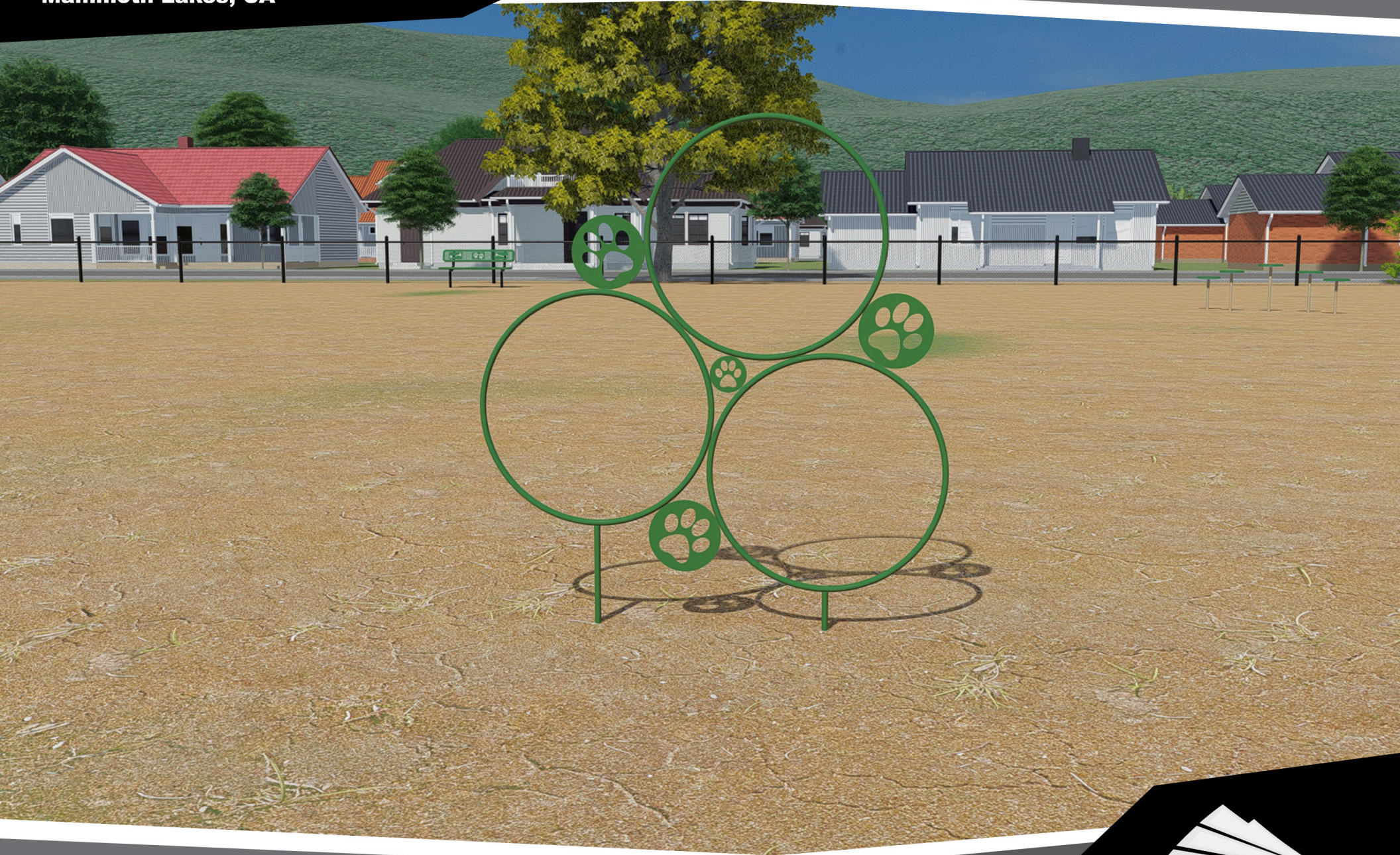


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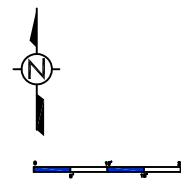
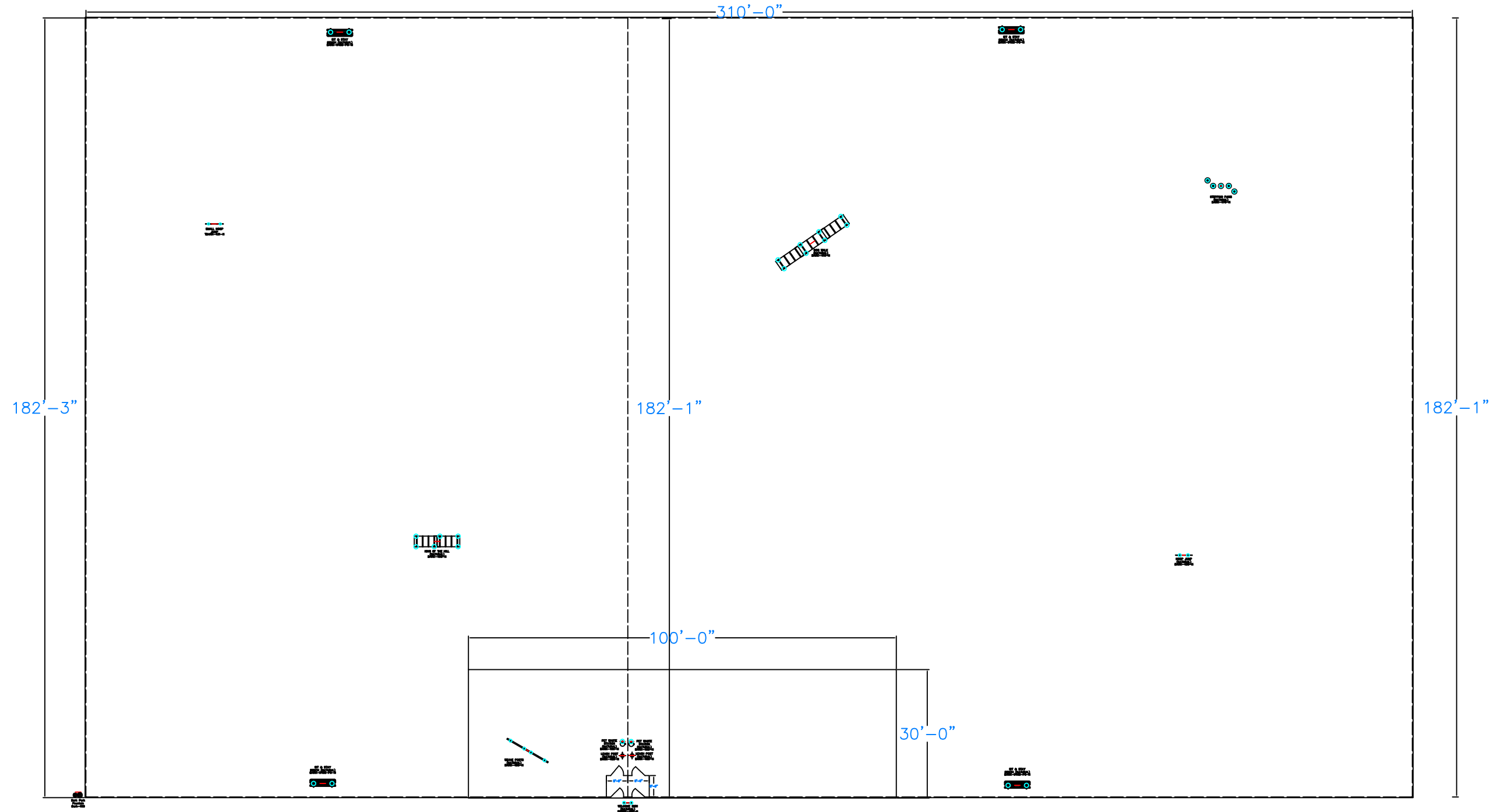




**Mammoth Lakes Community Dog Park-Project 104757-01-Opt 1**  
**Mammoth Lakes, CA**







Area:  
SF: 56420  
LF: 984



Sales Representative  
Tyler Kyriopoulos  
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**GameTime**  
A PLAYCORE Company  
150 PlayCore Drive SE  
Fort Payne, AL 35967  
www.gametime.com



Mammoth Lakes  
Community Dog Park  
Mammoth Lakes, CA  
Representative  
Great Western

This Unit includes play events and routes or travel specifically designed for special needs users. It is the opinion of the manufacturer that these play events and routes of travel conform to the accessibility requirements of the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)

Total Elevated Play Components	0	Required	0
Total Elevated Play Components Accessible By Ramp	0	Required	0
Total Elevated Components Accessible By Transfer	0	Required	0
Total Accessible Ground Level Components Shown	0	Required	0
Total Different Types Of Ground Level Components	0	Required	0

This play equipment is recommended for children ages

Minimum Area Required:  
Scale: 1" = 5'-0"  
This drawing can be scaled only when in an 18" x 24" format

**IMPORTANT:** Soft resilient surfacing should be placed in the use zones of all equipment, as specified for each type of equipment, and at depths to meet the critical fall heights as specified by the U.S. consumer Product Safety Commission, ASTM standard F 1487 and Canadian Standard CAN/CSA-Z-614

Drawn By:  
MW  
Date:  
10/1/21  
Drawing Name:  
104757-01- Opt 1