

# When gone to the dogs is a good thing



**LONG BEACH:** Officials hope pooches at grassy solar-powered park can also chase away blight.

By Kelly Puente Staff Writer

LONG BEACH — It was a day for the dogs Sunday when the city unveiled its newest dog park to an eager crowd of residents and pooches.

K-9 Corner, at Ninth Street and Pacific Avenue, is now one of four dog parks in the city. Long Beach also has Recreation Park Dog Park at 5201 E. Seventh Street, a dog beach in Belmont Shore and the newly unveiled

downtown dog zone in Lincoln Park.

Two more dog parks are in the works in the Wrigley District at Golden Avenue and Wardlow Road and Scheer Park in North Long Beach, said Phil Hester, director of parks and recreation.

Antwon Guy, who lives less than a block from K-9 Corner, said the grassy, 3,500-square-foot space is ideal for his two Chihuahuas.

"We're very excited," he said. "It's too bad they can't just learn to put on the leash and come down here themselves."

Officials hope the new canine sanctuary, planted in a dense,

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Long Beach spent \$300,000 to develop the K-9 Corner Dog Park, which opened Sunday, above. The site at Pacific Avenue and Ninth Street allows dogs to run and socialize freely. First-day visitors included Sara Moren with her poodle, Millie, perched on her shoulder, left.

Stephen Carr  
Staff Photographer

# DOG PARK

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urban block with little open space, will chase away blight and revitalize the area.

"This part of the city was in need of a park," said 1st District Councilman Robert Garcia, who hosted the event along with the North Pine Neighborhood Alliance. "We're hoping it will activate the corner and help change the neighborhood."

Garcia, a past president of the alliance, said the grass-roots effort began two years ago when the neighborhood alliance proposed the project to then-Councilwoman Bonnie Lowenthal, who is now in the state Assembly. The space used

to be a blighted dirt lot, he said.

Lowenthal was also on hand Sunday to present an official certification from the State of California.

More than 200 attended the event, which featured a block party with an animal adoption fair, a barbecue hosted by the Police Officers' Association, vendors and a visit from police K-9 units.

From Chihuahuas and pit bulls to Afghans and poodles, the pooches were allowed to roam free in the park, jumping on rocks, rolling in the grass and lapping up water in the fountain.

Aside from being a sweet spot for dogs, Garcia said, the park is the first in the city to run entirely on solar energy. A

spokesman for Solar Source, which provided the park's solar panels, said the space uses 24 energy-efficient LED ground lights.

The entire \$300,000 project was funded by the city's Redevelopment Agency, said Development Services Director Craig Beck.

Resident Jennifer Stuart said she was looking forward to visiting regularly with her 8-month-old Maltese, named Olive. Before, Stuart said, she would have to travel to other parts of Long Beach or nearby cities to find cozy dog parks.

"It's a safe place where she can learn to socialize with other dogs," Stuart said. "She's gonna love it."

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