

## **D#53 FEE-IN-LIEU PROVISION FOR PARKS**

### **SUPPLEMENTAL STAFF REPORT**

**SUMMARY:** This Supplemental Staff Report provides responses to issues that were raised at a Planning Commission meeting regarding amendments to the Renton Municipal Code Development Regulations (Title IV). It also includes additional information that staff has identified as being necessary to include in the analysis for amendments.

#### **General Description**

These new provisions would allow developers the opportunity to conduct the following in lieu of providing common open space in a development:

- Extend a Public Trail if it has been identified in the Renton Trails and Bicycle Master Plan, or the Parks, Recreation, Open Space, or Natural Resources Plan, or an adopted Community Plan.
- Expand a Public Park if it has been identified in the Parks Recreation, Open Space, or Natural Resources Plan, or an adopted Community Plan.
- Pay a fee-in-lieu for the common open space if an off-site public park is within one quarter (1/4) mile of the site proposed for development, safe and easy pedestrian access is provided to such public park, and the public park is an integral part of the design approach of the development. The fee would be based upon the monetary value of the required improvements for the common open space plus the monetary value of the land area required to be placed in common open space. This fee would be allocated for park acquisition and development projects, not park maintenance.

These substitutions would also be expanded to vested King County projects where tot lots or similar areas are required.

Planning Commission Issue: How would safe pedestrian access be measured?

Staff Response: Based on a study completed by the Washington State Department of Transportation, pedestrian safety can be improved by the presence of many different types of right-of-way design techniques. These include such things as clearly identified cross walks, bulb outs to reduce crossing distance, smaller intersections, lighting, cross walk signals, and others. However, in the case of evaluating safe pedestrian access for the purpose of the proposed docket amendment, City staff would review such things as manmade or geographical barriers from the proposed development site to the existing public park, the presence of sidewalks and/or crosswalks within the area, street type and the number of trips on such street, and the design of the existing park in terms of the individuals ability to access the park (i.e. is there a stream between the property and the remainder of the park, or a large wooded area with no trail access). These circumstances will be different in each case and would be evaluated independently through the site plan review and/or the subdivision process.

Planning Commission Issue: What are the benefits that are provided to individuals from a common open space vs. a public park?

Staff Response: Common open space provides a benefit to individuals or employees within a particular development where as public parks provide a benefit to the entire public. Moreover, parks are public and common open spaces are typically private, resulting in differences in management and function. However, the City's existing development standards required that common open spaces provide an asset to the development by being located in a central area, enhancing access to green space, and allowing for open space in a high density development. These same benefits can be provided to a development, if the development is located by a public park and the development is designed to incorporate the public park so the previously mentioned criteria are achieved. For example, a small neighborhood park located in Boulder Colorado, Hiram Fullen Park (see Attachment A), was developed with three to four houses that line either side of the park. These homes all have front porches overlooking the park. This would be a circumstance where a public park provides the same benefit as common open space.

On the other hand, King County vested projects have a requirement to provide a tot lot. These tot lots are sized based on the number of units in the development. Typically when tot lots are incorporated into the development, they become the left over piece of land, located in the back corner of the site. These small tot lots are not required to be centrally located, resulting in a lack of "ownership" by the homeowners association. Ultimately these tot lots end up unmaintained and unused because of the location and size. In this circumstance, a fee-in-lieu of a usable tot lot would provide a significant benefit to the residents of the subdivision as well as to the surrounding community. The addition of a fee-in-lieu program would allow funding to be allocated to the City for future acquisition or development of a public park that would be centrally located and used. Overall, both common open spaces and public parks serve a clearly identified purpose, either way these spaces need to be incorporated into the development to result in a space that would benefit both the development and the public.

Additional Information: Staff proposes to add Public Park Improvements as an additional option to the potential substitutions for common open space. Introduced in the last staff report was the concept of Trail Improvements for Common Open Space if the trail had been identified in the Renton Trails and Bicycle Master Plan, or the Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Natural Resources Plan, or an adopted Community Plan. Staff recommends adding a provision for individuals to provide public Park Improvements in lieu of Common Open Space if the park has been identified in the Parks Recreation, Open Space, and Natural Resources Plan, or an adopted Community Plan. This substitution would be similar to the Trail Improvement substitution.

See Attachment B for proposed code changes.

Traffic

More...

Map

Satellit

Pearl St

503

Pearl St

Pearl St  
502



St

Fan  
Instit

Ashoka  
Credit Union

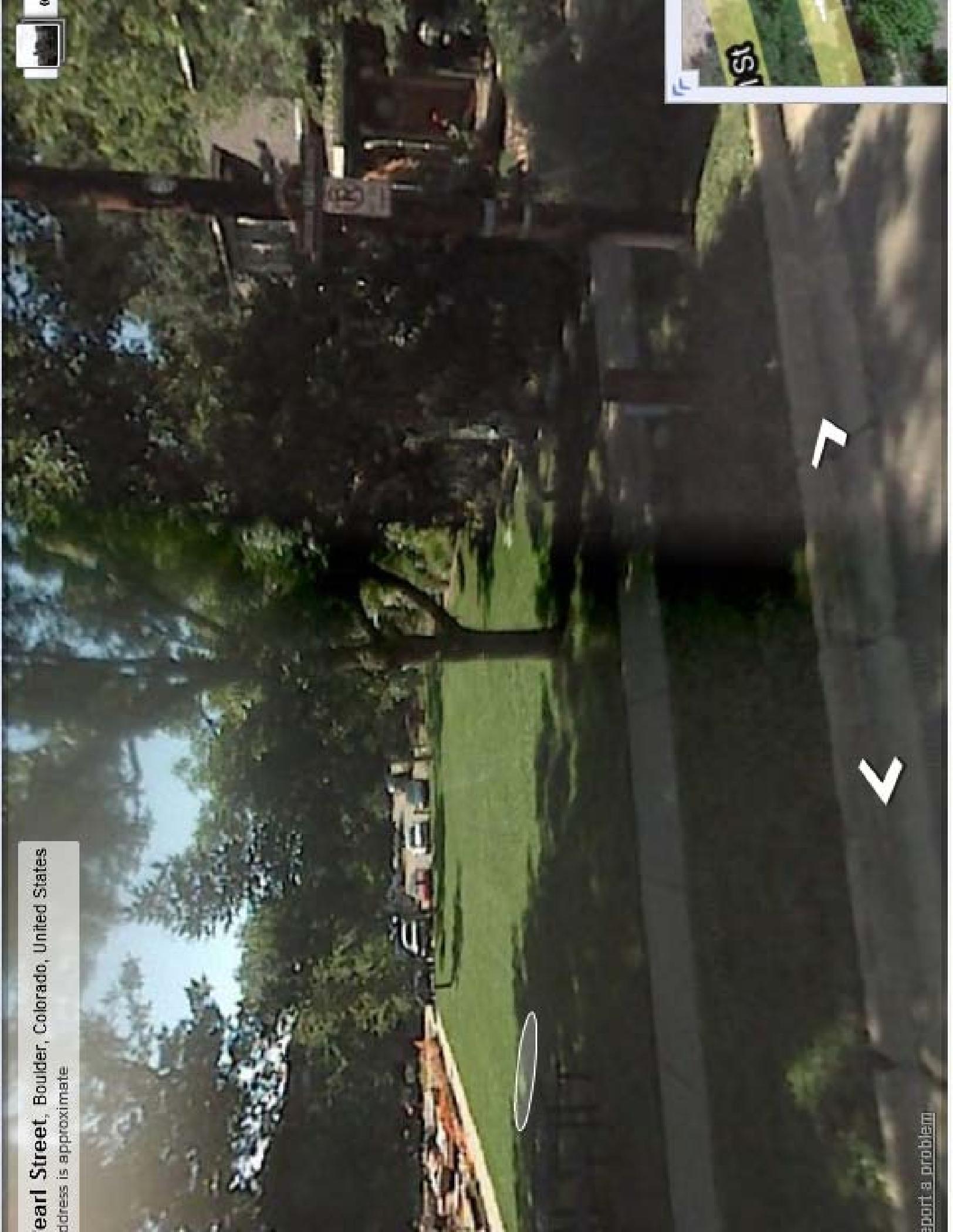
Steven Louth  
Law Offices



Report a problem



earl Street, Boulder, Colorado, United States  
Address is approximate



[report a problem](#)

**4-7-140 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE:**

**A. Parks Mitigation Fee:** Approval of all subdivisions located in either single family residential or multi-family residential zones as defined in the Zoning Code shall be contingent upon the subdivider's dedication of land or providing fees in lieu of dedication to the City, all as necessary to mitigate the adverse effects of development upon the existing park and recreation service levels. The requirements and procedures for this mitigation shall be per the City of Renton Parks Mitigation Resolution.

**B. Public Trail or Park Improvements or Fee-In-Lieu for Common Open Space:** Improvements to public trails or payment of a fee may occur to reduce common open space requirements, if approval for such substitution is accepted by the Community Services Department and granted by the Planning Director.

1. Applicability: Any development where common open space or a park is required and King County vested projects where tot lots or similar spaces are required.

2. Public Trail Improvement In Lieu of Common Open Space: The requirements for open space may be reduced where public trail improvements are being provided. On-site public trail improvements may occur as a substitute to common open space requirements on a square footage basis provided the trail has been identified in the Renton Trails and Bicycle Master Plan or The Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Natural Resources Plan or an adopted community plan. Trails shall be constructed to standards specified by the Renton Community Services Department and dedicated to and accepted by the City of Renton as a public trail.

3. Public Park Improvement In Lieu of Common Open Space: The requirements for open space may be reduced where public park improvements are being provided. On-site public park improvements may occur as a substitution to common open space requirements on a square footage basis provided the park has been identified in The Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Natural Resources Plan or an adopted community plan. The Park shall be constructed to standards specified by the Renton Community Services Department and dedicated to and accepted by the City of Renton as a public park.

3. Fee-In-Lieu of Common Open Space: A fee-in-lieu of may occur as a substitute to common open space requirements provided that an off-site public park is within one quarter (1/4) mile of the site proposed for development, safe and easy pedestrian access is provided to such public park, and the public park shall be an integral part of the design approach of the development.

a. Fee Calculation: The fee shall be based on the monetary value of the required improvements for common open space plus the monetary value of the land area required to be placed in common open space. The project applicant shall provide the City with an estimate of the improvement value and an appraisal for the value of the land for the identified intended use with utilities and other non-structural

improvements. The total monetary value of the fee-in-lieu shall be approved by the City of Renton, Community Services Department.

b. Fee shall be paid at time of final plat or final short plat recording or building permit issuance for non-subdivision projects.