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Re: Proposed Revisions to Parkland Dedication Ordinance

Dear Mayor and Members of the City Council,

The Austin Design Commission received a presentation from Ricardo Soliz of the Austin Parks and Recreation on proposed revisions to the Parkland Dedication Ordinance at its January meeting. Subsequently, Mr. Soliz met with the Urban Open Space Committee for further dialogue.

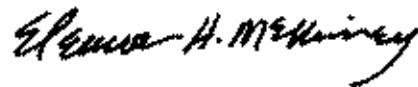
The Design Commission supports the following revisions to the Parkland Dedication Ordinance:

- Require fees for multi-family developments at the Site Plan stage, maintaining current options for Subdivisions
- Assess a simple fee for each residential unit
- Minimum fee should be an average of \$750 per unit, taking into account the unit's use of resources, proximity to the core, and alignment with the city's density and development goals
- Developments meeting Affordable Housing goals can qualify for a reduction of parkland fees
- Adjust parkland fees annually according to average real estate values (or inflation / cost of living increase)

The Design Commissions supports the current requirements that Parkland Fees may not be used for maintenance or operations. We recommend the fees be paid to the City of Austin, Parks and Recreation or other designated department exclusively for parks and open space development of enhancement within a one-mile radius of the proposed housing development. We encourage public-private partnerships between the City and private stakeholders / nonprofits in the expenditure of the parkland fees.

The City of Austin has a strong legacy of providing excellent parks and outdoor recreation opportunities. The addition of thousands of residents downtown creates more intensive use and a need for enhancement and expansion of the urban park system. Revisions to the Parkland Dedication Ordinance will provide one means of meeting this need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Eleanor H. McKinney". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Eleanor McKinney, Chair
Austin Design Commission

Cc:

Laura Huffman, Assistant City Manager
Greg Guernsey, Director, Neighborhood Planning and Zoning
Ricardo Soliz, PARD
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