



## Madison Parks Division

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**MADISON  
PARKS**

September 1, 2016

To the Development Community,

Thank you for the opportunity to meet and to discuss the complicated issue of the modifications that are being proposed to the Park Impact Fees. Engaging us in this discussion has provided a much fuller understanding of the implications that may occur if a complete fee implementation were to happen upon approval, as originally proposed. We value the input we have received from the development community and other leaders, which provided vital information prior to starting the public approval process. I especially want to note the work done on behalf of the development community by Matt Brink at Smart Growth Greater Madison and Andrew Disch at Madison Area Builders Association. They have provided responsive information and coordination to the City in this process.

Although staff is able to provide the necessary technical information it is clear that some of the issues that have been brought to our attention are most appropriately addressed by policy makers during the public process. I understand the increased fees are of significant concern to the development community. The increase in park fees is the result of a park system that provides a very high level of service to Madison visitors and residents. The existing impact fees have been a critically important part of the increased investment in the park system per resident (or service unit to be technical) over the past decade. Setting fees at significantly below the Needs Assessment values per resident would essentially be making a policy change that either the City was going to lower the level of parks development or was going to shift costs for development from new residents to existing taxpayers. Public policy choices of this magnitude are best made by our elected policy makers.

It is with this policy issue in mind, that the Park Impact Fee Ordinance and Needs Assessment will be introduced to Council on September 6, 2016. The Ordinance will go to at least the Board of Parks Commissioners, Plan Commission, and the Board of Estimates as a part of the approval process. The final public hearing and approval will occur at the Common Council. I invite you to participate in this process, and would appreciate continuing the conversation around this topic through and beyond final action by the Council.

The modified Park Impact Fee ordinance and related Needs Assessment will be moved forward to include phasing of the fees to lessen the burden on those that have projects in the pipeline or those that may be significantly and immediately impacted by the proposed changes. The phase in provisions will establish fees at 80% of the total calculated impact fee for 2017 and 90% of the total calculated impact fee in 2018. For both standard single family and multi-family units the 2017 rates will be less than what would be paid under the existing impact fee ordinance. The proposal will also allow for the affordable housing modifications to take effect while providing some relief for other development projects that didn't account for the fee changes as proposed.

Again, we would like to acknowledge the constructive input that was provided by the development community as we have gained better insight that has allowed us to inform and provide recommendations to policy makers. I am hopeful that we can build off of the relationships built during this process to engage the development community directly in our upcoming Park and Open Space Plan update. Having the development community engaged in this process will help yield a better plan for the future of our highly rated and appreciated Parks system.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Eric M. Knepp.

Eric M. Knepp  
Parks Superintendent

Cc: Mayor Soglin, All Alders