

May 15, 2026

To: Cameron Zapata, Senior Parks Planner
Lindsey Falkenburg, Parks Planning Manager

From: John Ghilarducci, Principal
Zech Hazel, Assistant Project Manager
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Re: Parks Impact Fee Update

This memorandum summarizes the characteristics of impact fees and the relevant statutory basis. It also provides an overview of current parks impact fee study results and the remaining steps of the study.

INTRODUCTION

Background

Impact fees are one-time charges paid at the time of development to be spent on capital projects that will expand and improve the parks system. To be eligible for impact fee funds, projects must be reasonably related to new development and proportionally charged to new development. Impact fees act as a mechanism for new population growth to buy into the existing system and allow a jurisdiction to maintain level-of-service standards as populations grow. These fees allow “growth to pay for growth” in a fair and equitable manner.

Impact fees are paid during the permitting process for new development or for major redevelopment. Typically, the developer is required to pay impact fees as a condition of obtaining a building permit.

Legal Basis

Impact fees are enabled by state statutes, authorized by local ordinance, and constrained by the United States Constitution. Impact fees are enabled by RCW 82.02.050 through 82.02.110 and are permitted for:

- Public streets and roads,
- Publicly owned parks, open space, and recreation facilities,
- School facilities, and
- Fire protection facilities.

The City of Redmond (City) authorizes the calculation and imposition of impact fees in Section 3.10 of the Redmond Municipal Code.

CURRENT STUDY

In 2025, the City contracted with FCS to update their current parks impact fee methodology. Specifically, FCS is calculating the maximum legally defensible parks impact fee, allowing the City Council to adopt any parks impact fee up to that level. As part of this process, FCS has calculated the fee using both the City's current methodology and another commonly used approach, called the "standards-based methodology" for the purpose of this memorandum.

Current Methodology

The City's current parks impact fee is calculated using hours of park use as a level-of-service metric. The expected growth in the population and employment is measured in expected hours of park use. Growth-related project costs are then distributed to each type of development based on the expected proportion of hours attributable to that type. These costs are divided by the expected growth in units (either number of dwelling units or 1,000 square feet of gross-floor area) to accommodate the expected growth. This leads to a calculated fee per dwelling unit or per 1,000 square feet.

Standards-Based Methodology

The other methodology considered under this study uses the City's existing inventory of parks facilities (measured in park acres or trail miles) as well as the planned parks facilities to determine the City's overall levels of service for each facility category. Both current and future levels-of-service targets are considered when determining growth's eligible portion of planned projects and existing facilities. When considering the current level of service, only the portion of the project list required for maintaining the current level of service for growth is includable in the parks impact fee. When considering the future level of service, only the portion of the project list necessary to achieve that target for growth is includable. When the future level-of-service target is lower than the currently achieved level of service, the available existing parks facilities are includable in the parks impact fee. As both methods are equally defensible, the method that calculates a higher fee is used when determining the maximum legally defensible fee.

In addition, some projects are considered to be improving parks and creating capacity for growth without adding to the quantifiable standard chosen. For example, a project may add a swing set to an existing park but no additional acreage. These are called proportional projects and are assigned an eligibility based on the proportion of growth to the expected population at the end of the planning period.

The total cost basis is divided by the expected growth over the planning period. Growth is typically measured in residential equivalents, or the number of new residents plus a portion of the expected growth in employees within the City. This provides a nexus for charging non-residential development.

To calculate the impact fee, the total cost basis minus any adjustments is divided by the expected growth. This leads to a calculated fee per residential equivalent, which can then be applied to new development based on the expected number of new residents or residential-equivalent employees added by that development.

Results

FCS calculated the parks impact fee using both approaches: the City’s current approach, and the alternative standards-based approach. To make the fees comparable, both fees per unit of measurement were applied to a typical single-family residence (SFR) within the City. The resulting fees under both approaches can be shown in **Exhibit 1**.

Exhibit 1. Calculated Impact Fee

Methodology	Calculated		Calculated
	Fee	Unit	
Current	\$ 3,194	Per 1,000 Sq Ft	\$ 4,876
Standards-Based	\$ 3,783	per Residential Equivalent	\$ 8,290

Next Steps

FCS is scoped to give four presentations to stakeholders of the parks impact fee update. One of these presentations occurred on May 7th, 2026, to the Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission. FCS is also scheduled to present the results of the parks impact fee analysis at a City Council Work Session on June 9th, 2026. The remaining two meetings can occur with any stakeholder group that the City staff determines to be relevant. These presentations may include, for example, One Redmond, Master Builders Association, or additional appearances before the Redmond City Council.

Additionally, FCS will provide a report documenting the full impact fee process. This will outline background information on impact fees, an outline of the calculation of both approaches, and common questions regarding the implementation of fees.