



# City of Tigard Press Release

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## **Newly Adopted Fee Will Support City Parks and Recreation**

The Tigard City Council has unanimously adopted a new parks and recreation fee to partially pay for park maintenance and operations that will be charged as part of the utility bill of residents and businesses.

A typical residential customer who receives a utility statement from the City of Tigard will begin seeing a monthly charge of \$3.75. Typical business customers will see a monthly charge of approximately \$7, based on the number of parking spaces.

The adoption of the fee followed a lengthy community conversation that began last July and with a public hearing in January on ideas to address long-term city funding concerns and unmet needs in city parks. The charge will be implemented April 1, for all Tigard utility residential and business customers.

The new funding source will allow city staff address current park maintenance and may also be used to catch up on deferred park maintenance. For instance, some new basic equipment like new lawnmowers can be purchased, and new play equipment will be installed.

“The City Council’s adopted 2016-2017 budget made clear that the city’s General Fund, which covers day-to-day city services like police, library, community building and parks, will not be sustained at current levels at our current rate of expenses and population growth,” said Marty Wine, city manager. “To address the fact that our general fund revenues grow at 3.5 percent per year while expenses grow at 4.5 percent per year, the Budget Committee approved the creation of a parks utility fund that would take parks funding out of the general fund and be funded with a utility fee. This makes general fund dollars—previously paying for parks—available to invest in additional day-to-day city services.”

The adopted measure will offer a discount in the fee for qualifying low-income households who earn 50 percent or below of the state median income. All told, the fees are expected to generate a little more than \$1 million annually. Capital investments, including developing newly acquired park lands purchased since 2010, will not be addressed with the new charge.

All told the city owns 548 acres of parks and open space, which serves Tigard residents, visitors and employees of area businesses who work in Tigard.

The council at its Feb. 9 meeting discussed asking Tigard voters to approve a property tax levy at a later date, which could raise revenues that could replace the new fee and support parks.

The Budget Committee will also look at how recreation activities may be funded through the newly adopted fee. The committee's deliberations begin in April and are concluded in July, when the council will consider a budget for the 2016-2017 fiscal year.

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