

## #D-119 STREET FRONTAGE IMPROVEMENTS

### General Description

Currently, the City allows people to pay a fee-in-lieu of installation of required frontage improvements (curb, gutter, and sidewalk). However, there are many areas of the City where curb, gutter, and sidewalks are not part of the development pattern. Residents have questioned why they are required to pay the fee in these areas in particular. Staff recommends retaining the requirement, but specifying that the fee will be expended within reasonable proximity to where they are collected.

### Impact Analysis

#### Effect on rate of growth, development, and conversion of land as envisioned in the Plan

Not applicable. There is no anticipated effect on the rate of growth, development, and the conversion of land as envisioned in the Plan.

#### Effect on the City's capacity to provide adequate public facilities

Not applicable. There are no anticipated effects on the City's capacity to provide adequate public facilities created by the proposed changes.

#### Effect on the rate of population and employment growth

Not applicable. There are no anticipated effects on the rate of population and employment growth created by the proposed changes.

#### Whether Plan objectives are being met as specified or remain valid and desirable

The Vision identifies Renton as *"a well-connected place that builds cohesive networks, in the form of: partnerships that enhance community resources; transportation and recreation facilities that connect through trails, sidewalks, and streets; and local business volunteer, and neighborhood organizations that bring people together"*. The Plan identifies sidewalks as integral to fulfilling the Vision of the City. Additionally, Policy T-45 seeks to *"Ensure that new development contributes its fair share of the cost of transportation facilities, programs and services needed to mitigate growth related transportation impacts."* The proposal to retain the frontage improvement fee-in-lieu program seeks to further the Vision and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

#### Effect on general land values or housing costs

Requiring a property owner to either construct frontage improvement or pay a fee-in-lieu for those improvements does increase the cost to them.

#### Whether capital improvements or expenditures are being made or completed as expected

Not applicable.

#### Consistency with GMA, the Plan, and Countywide Planning Policies

The staff proposal is consistent with the Growth Management Act, Comprehensive Plan, and the Countywide Planning Policies. GMA planning goals seek to encourage efficient multimodal

transportation systems and sidewalks are part of a multimodal system. King County Countywide Planning Policy T-19 seeks to *"Design roads and streets, including retrofit projects, to accommodate a range of motorized and non-motorized travel modes in order to reduce injuries and fatalities and to encourage non-motorized travel. The design should include well-defined, safe and appealing spaces for pedestrians and bicyclists."*

#### Effect on critical areas and natural resource lands

Not applicable. There is no anticipated effect on critical areas or natural resource lands.

#### **Discussion**

Typically, the City requires installation of curb, gutter, and sidewalk as part of new development. For example, a subdivision of 20 new homes would be constructed with new interior roadways complete with curb, gutter, and sidewalk and would connect its exterior or frontage roads to the existing road network with curb, gutter, and sidewalks. For some infill development of just a few homes or a single home, the City may not require the physical installation of curb, gutter, and sidewalk, but would allow a fee-in-lieu to be paid. Per City Code, "The City may accept payment of a fee-in-lieu instead of requiring installation of street improvements in the following circumstances:

1. There are no similar improvements in the vicinity and there is no likelihood that the improvements will be needed or required in the next five (5) years; or
2. Installation of the required improvement would require substantial off-site roadway modifications; or
3. The Administrator determines that installation of the required improvement would result in a safety hazard; or
4. Other unusual circumstances preclude the construction of the improvements as required."

The money received through the fee-in-lieu option is utilized to complete the sidewalk network in the City, but the sidewalks may or may not be in the same community where the fee is collected. For example, a fee collected for development occurring in the Benson community may be utilized to build sidewalks in the Highlands. The equity of this practice has been questioned. Rather than not collect a fee-in-lieu in areas where there is not an existing sidewalk network, staff recommends amending Code to state that fees collected will be expended within a reasonable proximity to where they are collected. Staff proposes that the reasonable proximity be identified as the areas that were developed as part of the Transportation Element with the 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update. Under the policies established in the Element, the City will be tracking person trips and transportation projects by grouped Community Planning Areas. The groupings are as follows: 1) West Hill, City Center, Cedar River; 2) Valley; 3) Talbot, Benson, Fairwood; and 4) Kennydale, Highlands, and East Plateau. Staff recommends using these same established groupings as the areas for the frontage improvement fee in lieu expenditure areas.