



WASHOE COUNTY

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STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: May 27, 2026

DATE: May 17, 2026

TO: Open Space and Regional Parks Commission

FROM: Faye-Marie Pekar, Park Planner
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THROUGH: Aaron Smith, Operations Division Director
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SUBJECT: Presentation, discussion, and recommendation to approve the revised Parklands Easement Policy, to be effective immediately. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

SUMMARY

The Washoe County Parklands Easement Policy was created in 2008 and governs the process for granting easements for non-park purposes. The policy recognizes parkland as a valuable communal resource and public asset. Staff recommend the Commission approve the revised Parkland Easement Policy, to be effective immediately.

The updated policy proposes the following key updates:

1. Clarifies application procedures and review process
2. Requirements for documentation that applicant has explored all possible alternatives outside of parkland for the requested easement
3. Recognition of existing deed restrictions added to Criteria of Considerations
4. Aligning application fee from a fixed cost to the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission approved Fee Schedule
5. Establishment of annual rent requirements

Washoe County Strategic Objective supported by this item: Fiscal Sustainability: Long-Term Sustainability.

PREVIOUS ACTION

November 13, 2012 – The Board Approved revisions to the Washoe County Parkland Easement Policy to allow funds generated from easement and any additional financial mitigation required as part of an easement to be allocated to either Parks projects or to Parks operating and maintenance expenses, with specific disposition of funds to be determined by the Board of County Commissioners as part of its action on each proposed easement.

March 18, 2008 – The Board approved the Parkland Easement Policy and authorized the Regional Parks and Open Space Director to incorporate associated fees into the Department's fee schedule. Heard as Item 08-236.

AGENDA ITEM # _____

February 5, 2008 – Open Space and Regional Parks Commission reviewed, discussed and provided recommendation to approve the Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space Granting of Easement Policy.

BACKGROUND

On March 18, 2008, A Parks Department Policy Statement on Parkland Easements was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners (Board). The purpose of the policy is to identify the process to consider the granting of various types of easements that will allow for the fair and uniform administration of non-park property use. Revisions to this policy were adopted by the Board on October 24, 2012, directing funds generated from parkland easements allocated to Parkland projects or to Parks operating and maintenance expenses. This allowed flexibility in how revenues generated from approved easements can be allocated and spent.

Public parkland is a valuable public asset. Easements across parkland are typically requested only when no feasible alternative exists. When utilities or entities use parkland for infrastructure that does not directly serve the park, it is standard practice is require fair market compensation to protect the interests of the parkland. Staff have identified the need to update the policy to better reflect current land management practices and to ensure appropriate compensation is collected for non-park easement use of park property.

The revised Parkland Easement Policy allows for the collection of annual rent related to new non-park easements granted, or any existing non-park easement modified effective after adoption. The rent will be re-evaluated at least every five (5) years in accordance with NRS 244 and Washoe County Code 80.540. Annual rent shall be 3% of the Appraised Value or the Adjusted Value (whichever is less) based on the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: Housing in U.S. City Average (CPIHOSNS) applied to the fair market value, determined by Nevada Law.

Additional Policy language changes include clarification to procedural protocol for Parkland Easement application review and evaluation criteria, recognition that existing deed restrictions on parkland and/or restrictive covenants may prohibit requested easement approvals, and aligns the Parklands Easement Application fee to the Commission Approved Fee Schedule.

FISCAL IMPACT

Annual rent is payable when due to cost center 140100, Miscellaneous Revenue GL 485300. A late charge may be assessed if subsequent billings are required to cost center 140100, Easement Fines GL 471145.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission approve the revised Parkland Easement Policy, to be effective immediately

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Commission agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be: "Move to approve the revised Parkland Easement Policy, to be effective immediately".

