



WASHOE COUNTY

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STAFF REPORT

COMMISSION MEETING DATE: April 5, 2022

DATE: March 30, 2022

TO: Open Space and Regional Parks Commission

FROM: Sophia Kirschenman, Park Planner,
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THROUGH: Eric Crump, Operations Division Director
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SUBJECT: Presentation, discussion, and possible recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners to grant a Slope and Landscape Easement totaling $\pm 13,017$ square feet and a Temporary Construction Easement totaling $\pm 78,439$ square feet to Toll North Reno, LLC on APN 083-024-06, commonly known as Lazy 5 Regional Park, for the purposes of constructing and maintaining a 3:1 landscaped slope to support the neighboring Stonebrook West housing development, as well as associated mitigation in the form of trail construction. (Commission District 4.) (For Possible Action.)

SUMMARY

Toll North Reno, LLC is developing a subdivision, Stonebrook West, abutting Lazy 5 Regional Park to the north. The City of Sparks approved the project with a six-foot-tall block retaining wall and six-foot-tall fence on top of the retaining wall along the park boundary. In lieu of building the retaining wall, Toll North Reno, LLC (Toll) is requesting a slope and landscape easement to construct a 3:1 slope within the park, along portions of the northern boundary. This retaining wall, landscaped slope and associated irrigation would be maintained by the homeowner's association. Toll is also proposing construction of a trail to offset parkland impacts.

Strategic Objective supported by this item: Safe, Secure and Healthy Communities

PREVIOUS ACTION

July 22, 2003 – The Washoe County Board of County Commissioners (Board) approved the amended Lazy 5 Regional Park Master Plan.

BACKGROUND

Washoe County owns certain real property, currently identified as APN 083-024-06, commonly known as Lazy 5 Regional Park, located east of Pyramid Highway and north of Wingfield Hills Road in Spanish Springs. The park currently contains playgrounds, multi-use fields, a skate park, splash park, community center, library, and other amenities. The Lazy 5 Regional Park Master Plan identifies additional amenities to be

built at the park, including baseball fields, basketball courts, a plant interpretive area, and a path that would extend around the perimeter of the park.

Directly north and northeast of the skate park and multi-use field area will be the site of the future Stonebrook West housing development. The City of Sparks approved the project with a six-foot-tall block retaining wall and six-foot-tall fence on top of the retaining wall along the boundary between Lazy 5 Regional Park and the subdivision. No landscape buffer was included as part of the project (see Exhibit 1 below). This alternative would not result in a physical impact to the park but would have a visual impact on park users. Toll North Reno, LLC (Toll) is currently proposing a slope and landscape easement within the park as this would be cost-effective for the developer and would provide a better visual buffer for park users. This slope would be landscaped with natural vegetation and trees planted at a rate of one tree per 50 linear feet.

In lieu of paying for the appraised value of the easement area, Toll is proposing to mitigate impacts associated with the project by installing and maintaining park landscaping and constructing a trail within the park, in conformance with the Lazy 5 Regional Park Master Plan. An appraisal was conducted and determined that the value of the permanent easement area is \$45,675.00 and the value of the temporary construction easement area is \$54,907.00, for a total of \$100,582.00. However, Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space does not typically require payment for temporary easements. Toll estimates that the cost for the landscaping and irrigation on the slope will be approximately \$6/sf or \$78,102.00 and that the cost for the trail will be approximately \$13,080.00. Given that the cost of the park improvements well-exceeds the appraised value of the permanent easement, staff is supportive of the proposed mitigation measures in lieu of payment.



Exhibit 1 – Rendering of the approved 6'-tall fence atop the 6'-tall retaining wall

There is an area of the park directly north of the multi-use fields with existing mature trees. In order to protect and preserve these trees, the applicant is proposing to install the approved retaining wall in this location, with the 3:1 slope to the east and west of the area (see Exhibit 2). The combination of the slope, retaining wall, landscaping and

preservation of existing mature landscaping will provide a better visual buffer than the construction of a retaining wall along the full length of the project boundary.

In addition to landscaping, the applicant is proposing mitigation in the form of trail construction and connectivity. The Lazy 5 Regional Park Master Plan shows a meandering path along the northern boundary of the park property connecting the skatepark area to a future plant interpretive area (see Exhibit 3). An informal footpath currently exists along a portion of the delineated alignment, but sections have been overgrown or do not exist. The proposed slope would encroach into the existing trail area in several locations. Toll will re-construct these portions of the trail and establish new sections of the trail to create connectivity between the existing skate park and the Reach 9 trail, located to the northeast of the park. Based on staff needs, the applicant will construct a three-foot-wide formal foot trail directly north of the multi-use fields, to transition to a four-foot-wide trail to the northeast of the multi-use fields. This will allow staff to utilize the trail for maintenance access, when needed. The trail will be a compacted dirt trail, approximately 4”-6” above grade.

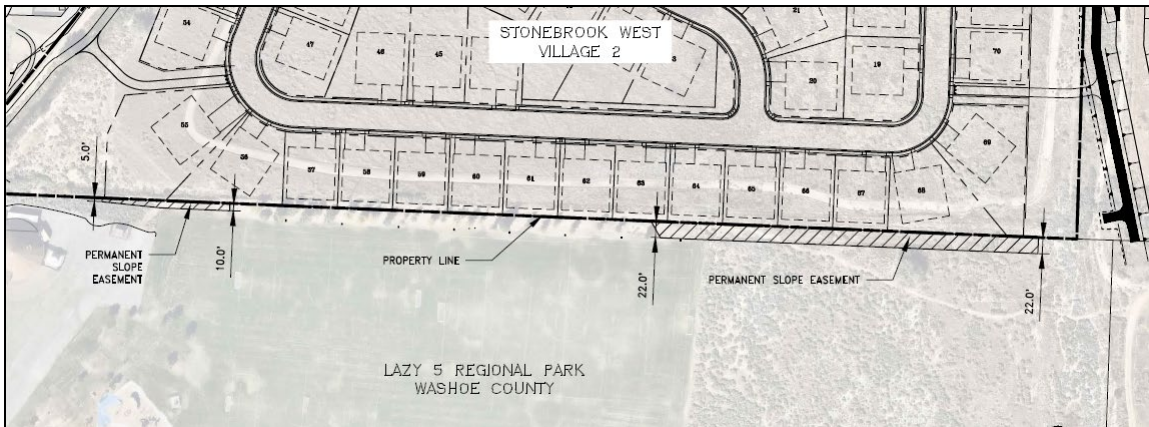


Exhibit 2 – Permanent slope easements to the west and east of the existing trees

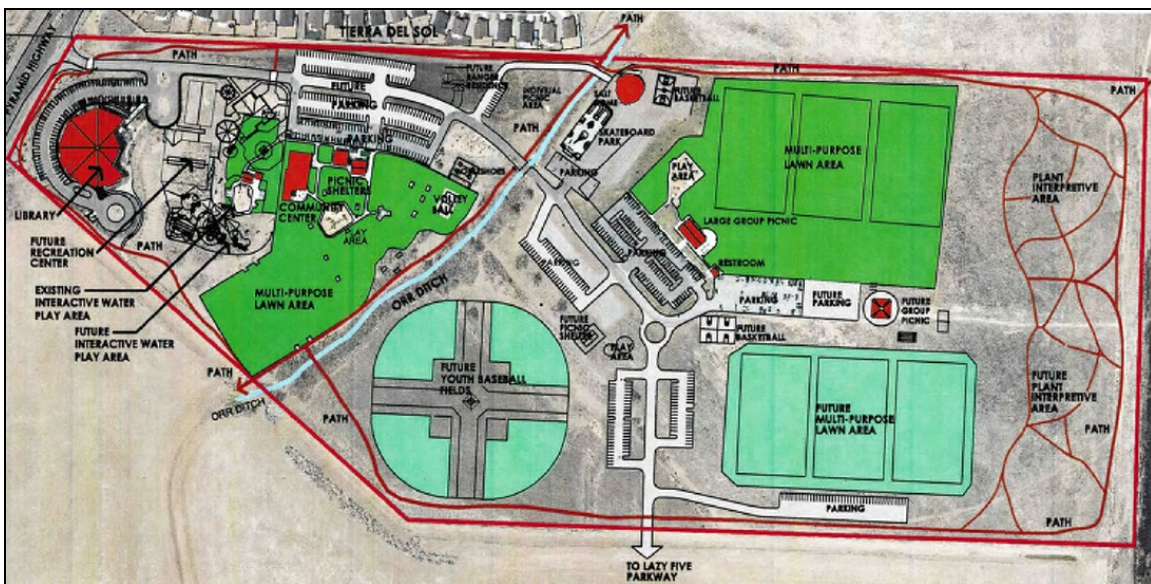


Exhibit 3 – Lazy 5 Regional Park Master Plan showing a proposed trail along the northern park boundary

Parkland Impacts

There will be temporary noise and visual impacts during construction. Grading of the slope within the park is anticipated to begin in summer of 2022 and last for three months. Installation of the associated landscaping and irrigation is expected to occur in fall of 2022. However, the applicant has noted that there have been several supply chain and project delays that could result in postponement of the installation of the irrigation and landscaping. Toll will complete the improvements as soon as possible and will provide updates to Washoe County staff when the timeline is solidified.

Additionally, per the easement deed, Toll will coordinate with Washoe County staff to ensure that parkland impacts are minimized and that construction of the slope and associated improvements does not conflict with permitted or planned events on the multi-use fields. Should installation of the irrigation and landscaping be delayed, Toll will provide erosion control measures and will revegetated the slope with a native and/or adapted perennial seed mix, as reviewed and approved by Washoe County. Overall, the proposed slope and landscape easement, and associated trail mitigation will improve access and visual enjoyment of the park.

Consistency with the Parkland Easement Policy

Staff has determined that the proposed easements and mitigation are consistent with the Parkland Easement Policy as the project will result in a net benefit to park users and the general public by improving connectivity, access and visual resources within the park. The proposal is also consistent with the Lazy 5 Regional Park Master Plan and existing amenities, including the multi-use field area and mature landscaping. Thus, staff has determined that the proposed project is complementary with planned and existing park uses at the subject site. The trail connectivity will also provide substantial long-term benefit to the park system.

FISCAL IMPACT

No fiscal impact to Washoe County. Construction and maintenance of the slope, landscaping and irrigation, and permitting associated with the project would be the responsibility of Toll North Reno, LLC.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Park Commission recommend that the Board of County Commissioners grant a Slope and Landscape Easement totaling ±13,017 square feet and a Temporary Construction Easement totaling ±78,439 square feet to Toll North Reno, LLC on APN 083-024-06, commonly known as Lazy 5 Regional Park, for the purposes of constructing and maintaining a 3:1 landscaped slope to support the neighboring Stonebrook West housing development, as well as associated mitigation in the form of trail construction.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Commission agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be:

“Move to recommend that the Board of County Commissioners grant a Slope and Landscape Easement totaling ±13,017 square feet and a Temporary Construction Easement totaling ±78,439 square feet to Toll North Reno, LLC on APN 083-024-06, commonly known as Lazy 5 Regional Park, for the purposes of constructing and

maintaining a 3:1 landscaped slope to support the neighboring Stonebrook West housing development, as well as associated mitigation in the form of trail construction.”