



May 15, 2018

Dallas City Council  
1500 Marilla Street  
Dallas, Texas 75201

Dear Mayor Rawlings and Members of the Dallas City Council:

The Dallas Builders Association and the residential construction professionals who comprise our organization have participated as a stakeholder working with city staff and others in the community to seek a balanced approach to the proposed park dedication ordinance. It is scheduled to be briefed to the City Council on Wednesday, May 16.

For more than 70 years, we have dedicated ourselves to making Dallas an outstanding place to live by building and expanding parks throughout our city. Naturally, our Association has concerns with this type of ordinance. In surrounding cities, parkland dedication ordinances are often used to artificially drive up the cost of housing to deprive low and moderate income families of the opportunity for new homeownership. In fact, every \$1,000 increase to the price of a home prevents more than 20,000 Texas families from affording that home according to the Real Estate Center at Texas A&M. With this in mind, we urge the Council to consider the following recommendations:

- **Include a density bonus that allows for additional home sites and additional parkland.**
  - With a lower “per lot” cost, a more affordable home can be constructed.
  - We believe that this approach can be a “win-win” for both the city and property owners.
- **Eliminate the ability to raise the fee up to 5% every 5 years.**
  - For the sake of transparency, certainty and clarity and due to the fact that this is a new endeavor for the city, future fee increases should be subject to direct council action. Such action will consider the impact on the market and housing affordability alongside the needs of the Park and Recreation Department.
- **Phase in the fees and review the impact of the ordinance after 2 years.**
  - This ordinance is a new endeavor for Dallas and one that is poised to add more than \$1,100 in fees for each single-family home.
  - We recommend implementing fee-in-lieu and park development fees at one-half of the proposed levels with a mandatory review two years after implementation along with relief or total exemption for affordable housing units.

- **Provide specificity and certainty regarding when private land will be eligible for credit and when the city will accept a dedication of land.**
  - We echo the specific concerns conveyed by the Real Estate Council on this issue.
  - Clarify criteria for when the Parks and Recreation Department will accept a dedication of land.

In addition to the changes proposed above, the Dallas Builders Association agrees with the recommendations submitted by The Real Estate Council in their letter dated May 10. We sincerely hope that this ordinance will further the addition of necessary parkland in our city without subtracting the opportunities provided by affordable homeownership.

Once again, we appreciate your efforts and that of the city staff and other stakeholders who have helped craft this ordinance. We will continue to provide feedback, direction and assistance with its implementation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phil Crone". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Phil" being more prominent and the last name "Crone" following in a similar style.

Phil Crone  
Executive Officer, Dallas Builders Association