



PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

FROM: Planning & Zoning Department **DATE:** January 21, 2021

SUBJECT: TR 2021-01 Public hearing to consider amendments to Chapter 118, Article VII (Parking and loading regulations) of the North Richland Hills Code of Ordinances regarding parking surfaces on public property within a floodplain.

PRESENTER: Clayton Comstock, Planning Director

SUMMARY:

Revisions are proposed to the zoning ordinance related to Article VII (Parking and loading regulations). The revisions would add language to allow for the use of alternative parking surface materials for public property within a floodplain. This revision would allow for the immediate use of the Fossil Creek Park Mountain Bike/Hiking Trails currently under construction. You can find out more about the project [online here](#).

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Many public parks utilize floodplain corridors for passive recreation activities such as walking, hiking, biking, and nature watching. Convenient vehicle parking for these passive recreational activities may be necessary to expand access to the community. However, paved surfaces are not permitted or encouraged in floodplain areas.

The use of permeable parking surfaces may help reestablish a natural hydrologic balance and reduce runoff volume by trapping and slowly releasing precipitation into the ground instead of allowing it to flow into storm drains and out to receiving waters as effluent. This same process also reduces the peak rates of discharge by preventing large, fast pulses of precipitation through the stormwater system.

Permeable parking surfaces can reduce the concentration of some pollutants. By slowing down the process, permeable parking surfaces can cool down the temperature of urban runoff, reducing the stress and impact on the stream or lake environment.

The proposed text amendment to the zoning ordinance is below. The language in Chapter 118, Section 118-831(f) (Minimum parking requirements) is modified to add the following text.

Sec. 118-831. – Minimum parking requirements.

...

(f) *Development standards.*

...

(11) *Exception for city-owned property within floodplain.* Parking, driving, and maneuvering areas located on city-owned property within a FEMA-designated floodplain zone and used for passive open space recreation may be constructed of permeable parking surfaces such as permeable asphalt, permeable concrete, permeable pavers, or flexible base. Flexible base must meet minimum testing standards established by the Texas Department of Transportation and be approved by the City Engineer.

The approval of this revision would allow a small flex-base parking lot area to be installed within the floodplain of Fossil Creek off of Onyx Drive for the new [Fossil Creek Park Mountain Bike & Hiking Trails](#). This type of parking surface is commonly used in floodplains and for hiking and biking trailheads.

The NRH Parks Department will be making a brief presentation on the trail project and will be available for any questions at the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting.

CITY COUNCIL: The City Council will consider this request at the January 25, 2021, meeting following a recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve TR 2021-01.