



City of Rochester Hills
AGENDA SUMMARY
FINANCIAL ITEMS

1000 Rochester Hills Dr.
Rochester Hills, MI 48309
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www.rochesterhills.org

Legislative File No: 2025-0149

TO: Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Ken Elwert, CPRE, Director, Parks and Natural Resources
Dennis Andrews, CPRP, Deputy Parks and Natural Resources Director

DATE: April 28, 2025

SUBJECT: Request for Acceptance for Second Reading – an Ordinance to amend sections 54-466 and 54-467 and to add section 54-472 of Chapter 54, fees, of the code of ordinances of the City of Rochester Hills, Oakland County, Michigan, to add fees for Innovation Hills, clarify language regarding resident and nonresident permits, to repeal conflicting ordinances, and prescribe a penalty for violations.

REQUEST:

For City Council to accept for Second Reading an Ordinance to amend sections 54-466 and 54-467 and to add section 54-472 of Chapter 54, fees, of the code of ordinances of the City of Rochester Hills, Oakland County, Michigan, to add fees for Innovation Hills, clarify language regarding resident and nonresident permits, to repeal conflicting ordinances, and prescribe a penalty for violations.

BACKGROUND:

Innovation Hills, one of the City's most popular parks, welcomed 449,451 visitors in 2024 and is home to the busiest playground in the City, designed to be inclusive with a special emphasis on visitors with autism. Recently ranked No. 1 on the "Top 25 Places to Visit with Kids in Metro Detroit", the park continues to attract visitors from across the City, State, and Nation.

Since opening, Innovation Hills has undergone continuous investment and improvement, including a rope bridge and a new restroom building, but with an annual operating cost exceeding \$340,000, it currently lacks a dedicated revenue stream. Three of the City's four regional parks already have consistent revenue models, and implementing a vehicle entry fee at Innovation Hills would align it with those parks while following the common practice of charging for parking at high-demand destinations like the Detroit Zoo, Stoney Creek Metropark, and local downtowns. The new ParkMobile system would allow visitors to easily pay via app, QR code, text, or phone call, requiring zero upfront investment and eliminating the need for parking booths or additional infrastructure.

The proposed \$1.50 hourly fee is expected to generate \$275,000–\$300,000 annually, which will allow us to reinvest in the park and subsidize operational and long-term maintenance costs. Additionally, the hourly fee would help manage peak-time congestion and encourage visitors to purchase an annual City Park Pass, which also grants access to Spencer Park and Bloomer Park. Non-residents would bear a higher cost, ensuring a more equitable system for local taxpayers. Park visitors would still have free options, including parking across Hamlin Road, walking, or biking into the park. This new funding structure will ensure Innovation Hills remains a premier destination for years while maintaining its high level of service and accessibility for all visitors.

RECOMMENDATION:

That City Council accept for Second Reading, an Ordinance to amend sections 54-466 and 54-467 and to add section 54-472 of Chapter 54, fees, of the code of ordinances of the City of Rochester Hills, Oakland County, Michigan, to add fees for Innovation Hills, clarify language regarding resident and nonresident permits, to repeal conflicting ordinances, and prescribe a penalty for violations.

APPROVALS:	SIGNATURE	DATE
Department Review		
Department Director		
Budget Content: Chief Financial Officer		
Purchasing Process: Procurement Manager		
Mayor		
City Clerk		

Contract Reviewed by City Attorney ☐ Yes ☒ N/A