



CITY OF LAKE FOREST PARK

CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA COVER SHEET

Meeting Date	May 11, 2023
Originating Department	Planning
Contact Person	Steve Bennett, Planning Director and Kim Adams Pratt, City Attorney
Title	Ordinance 23-1263/Creating Chapter 12.50 of the Lake Forest Park Municipal Code, Retaining Walls

Legislative History

- First Presentation - January 26, 2023, regular City Council meeting
 - Second Presentation – February 6, 2023, City Council special Committee of the Whole meeting
 - Third Presentation – February 23, 2023, regular City Council meeting
 - Fourth Presentation – April 13, 2023, regular City Council meeting
 - Fifth Presentation – May 11, 2023, regular City Council meeting with Public Hearing
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Attachments:

1. Ordinance 23-1263/Creating Chapter 12.50 of the Lake Forest Park Municipal Code, Retaining Walls
 2. Retaining Wall Design Guidelines
 3. Sound Transit Comments
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Executive Summary

This ordinance (Attachment 1) would establish criteria regulating the method of construction and the appearance of retaining walls that are built within or adjacent to publicly owned right-of-way that supports or protect public transportation infrastructure. Since the February 23, 2023, Council discussion, revisions have been made to remove language prohibiting rockeries and timber or concrete laggings. This will allow flexibility but maintain the requirement that an architectural finish be provided.

The monitoring plan has also been revised from 5 years to 3 years, and the reference in the Design Guidelines to reducing sound reverberation has been removed to allow for further study and potentially a separate ordinance for noise attenuation.

Since the April 13, 2023, Council discussion, the sound attenuation provision has been modified and moved from the design guidelines (Attachment 2) to the ordinance (Attachment 1). Sound Transit has provided comments on the draft guidelines which are included in Attachment 3. The current draft of the design guidelines includes some suggested changes that Council could consider after the public hearing to address the comments from Sound Transit.

Background

Large scale, retaining walls in or adjacent to publicly owned rights-of-way become de facto landmarks identifying the community they are located in. It is imperative that such significant, recognizable features integrate with and support the community identity. This ordinance would adopt by reference a proposed set of design guidelines (Attachment 2) that would provide visual examples of the types of architectural and landscape treatments that would be acceptable to mitigate the visual impact of retaining walls. As currently drafted, the Public Works Director would make the decision on compliance with the regulations and design guidelines.

Fiscal & Policy Implications

Adoption of this ordinance would add review criteria and additional staff review time for a limited number of right-of-way permit applications involving public transportation improvements.

Alternatives

<i>Options</i>	<i>Results</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopt ordinance	City code include regulation of the appearance of large retaining walls being built in the right-of-way
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No action	City does not increase regulatory control over the appearance of large retaining wall projects being built in the right-of-way

Staff Recommendation

After holding the public hearing, staff recommends approving the ordinance and design guidelines.