



# The BUGLE

The Camp Verde Bugle - serving Camp Verde, Arizona

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## Council gets final figures on impact fees

*Fees could raise \$3.8 million in next five years*

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Staff Reporter

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According to estimates, impact fees in Camp Verde will raise approximately \$3.8 million in the next five years if they were implemented.

The big question, however, is if they will ever be implemented.

The estimates came as part of a final report on the town's impact fee study just completed by the firm Tischler-Bise.

The controversial tax on development would be used to fund capital expenditures for the Marshal's Office, Parks and Recreation, town government buildings and vehicles, and a new library with all the trimmings.

This is the second time the town has tried to enact the fees, and according to a couple of audience members they will be challenged once again.

The council passed the ordinances creating the fees in 2002, only to have them repealed by the voters in a referendum the next year.

Following the presentation by Tischler Bise representative Carson Bise, Camp Verde residents Henry Shill and Bob Womack let it be known that if the council passed the ordinances creating the impact fees, they would take out petitions to refer the issue to the voters again.

Shill said he favors a 1-percent sales tax as opposed to the impact fees.

"According to Dane's (Finance Director Dane Bullard) estimates a 1-percent tax would raise \$1 million a year," Shill said. "That's more than the impact fees would raise and it would be more fair to everyone."

Womack expressed his concerns that the fees would affect the affordability of new homes.

"You do not made homes affordable by stacking on fees," Womack said. "Impact fees won't pass muster."

The fee being proposed for a single-family residence would add between \$2,600 and \$2,800 to the cost of a new home.

The fees do not apply to existing homes or to additions or improvements to existing homes, only new construction, both residential and commercial.

With the exception of council member Howard Parrish, the council spoke in favor of the fees.

Council member Ron Smith said the fees are minor compared to some cities and towns.

"I recently spoke to someone from the town of Maricopa, where growth has doubled the population in just 18 months, from 10,000 to 20,000 population. That person told me that even with a \$6,000 impact fee, the town is barely able to keep up with growth," Smith said.

Mayor Tony Gioia said that he has heard from several developers that impact fees are just part of doing business in their eyes, citing the former developer of the Homestead who wrote a letter of support for the fees.

"It will be almost impossible for us to keep up with our future infrastructure needs without development starting to pay for itself," Gioia said.

With the completion of the impact fee study, which sets "defensible" impact fees, the next step is for the council to have the ordinances drawn up that would authorize the fees once passed by the council.

Impact fees can be implemented by a majority vote of the council.

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