

LAS CRUCES SUN-NEWS.com

City to revisit talk on proposed impact fees

By Steve Ramirez / Sun-News reporter

Posted: 01/13/2010 12:00:00 AM MST

To see a copy of the presentation on proposed impact fees made by Duncan and Associates, of Austin, Texas, [click here.](#)

LAS CRUCES - Should additional impact fees for major road improvements, increased public safety and drainage be assessed citywide or should they only be charged in the growth areas of the East and West mesas?

There was no consensus Monday from City Council as it discussed the options at a work session at City Hall. The council only agreed that it wants to talk more about it, and Mayor Ken Miyagishima said he will call a special council work session at 1 p.m. Feb. 17. By then, Miyagishima and city administrators hope to have a better indication of how much those impact fees would be and how residents would be affected by the proposed addition of impact fees.

"Ultimately, it would come down to the residents paying for those in one way or another," said Petra Chavez, a retired accountant who has lived just to the north of the Mesquite Historic District for the past 30 years. "If it were to mean that my neighbors and I could be guaranteed better police and fire protection, then, sure, I'd be willing to pay my fair share.

"But growth always sparks the need for increased impact fees, and I can agree that the new homeowners, new businesses that come to the city

should bear the brunt of those costs more so than those of us that have been living here a long time. I'd like to hear more about it; I'm glad that the council wants to take some time to examine this. But as fast as Las Cruces is growing, it looks like (the addition of impact fees) has to happen."

Miyagishima said proposed impact fees for major road improvements, public safety and storm drainage could be too much. An independent study conducted by James Beckett and Associates, of Austin, Texas, has estimated the combined impact fee for the three additional public services could cost an additional \$5,100. Those added costs would be charged primarily to home builders and developers, who would pass on those costs to customers who either bought houses or opened businesses.

"In all fairness, I need to know how it's going to be utilized before I can decide one way or another," Miyagishima said. "To me, based on what I've seen, that seems too excessive."

But members of the city's Capital Investment Advisory Committee, which includes representation from home builders and developers, have recommended that the council exempt the city's core area from the additional impact fees because much of the land in the city's core is already occupied and only in-fill development could occur.

"Incentives that would help out the downtown area by eliminating impact fees would be great," said Greg Smith, president of the Las Cruces Downtown Partnership, a nonprofit organization that is promoting the revitalization of downtown Las Cruces.

Judd Singer, Capital Investment Advisory Committee chair, said, "Most development is occurring on the

Advertisement

TARGET WEB COUPON
EXPIRES 2/27/10

25¢ each

with purchase of twenty-five
4x6" Kodak instant prints



This coupon is intended for use by the original recipient only and is void if copied, scanned, transferred, purchased, sold or prohibited by law. Limit one offer per transaction. GiftCards and tax will not be included in determining purchase total. No cash value. Offer available at Target One Hour Photo Labs. Go to Target.com/photo for the location nearest you. One Hour service limited to machine capacity.




9856-0113-1882-4674-0306-4005-84

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

LAS CRUCES SUN-NEWS.com

east side of town and little in the in-fill areas."

Isaac Chavez, representing the Las Cruces Board of Realtors, said current land use assumptions used by the city to determine impact fees need to be changed. He added that what has been proposed doesn't correspond to estimates used in the draft of the Vision 2040 Plan, which is supposed to help guide development in Do-a Ana County through the year 2040.

"We can't talk out of both sides of our mouth," Chavez said. "There's a lot of unknowns that have to be answered before we charge a public safety fee."

And, those are the unknowns city officials want answers for before they'll commit to additional impact fees.

Steve Ramirez can be reached at sramirez@lcsun-news.com ; (575) 541-5452.

Advertisement

TARGET WEB COUPON
EXPIRES 2/27/10

25¢ each
with purchase of twenty-five
4x6" Kodak instant prints



This coupon is intended for use by the original recipient only and is void if copied, scanned, transferred, purchased, sold or prohibited by law. Limit one offer per transaction. GiftCards and tax will not be included in determining purchase total. No cash value. Offer available at Target One Hour Photo Labs. Go to Target.com/photo for the location nearest you. One Hour service limited to machine capacity.





9856-0113-1882-4674-0306-4005-84

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™