



Local News

Council may vote on citywide impact fees

BY JEFFREY GAUTREAU, Sun Staff Writer

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Citywide impact fees will be up for debate and a possible vote at the Yuma City Council meeting 5:30 p.m. Wednesday at the council chambers in City Hall, One City Plaza.

Citizen comment on the impact fees will be taken during the public hearing, and the council may vote to adopt any of five alternatives that have been created.

Impact fees, also known as development fees, are one-time payments that developers pay to cover the cost of new infrastructure or capital expenditures and facilities.

Currently, the city does not have an impact fee. Last year, the council adopted a limited-area transportation-impact fee for development near the Yuma Palms Regional Center.

The fee structure the council is considering is designed to replace both of these systems and cover all development in the city limits. The fees are charged to finance eight categories within city government.

- Alternative A, which is recommended by TischlerBise, a Bethesda, Md.-based economic, fiscal and planning consulting firm, would charge 100 percent of the fees to developers.

- Alternative B, which was recommended by the Citizen Impact Fee Advisory Committee, would charge 70 percent of the fees to developers.

For example, at 100 percent, the fees for a single-family residence would be \$6,073. At 70 percent, the costs would be roughly \$4,250. Adoption of 70 percent would mean the council would need to find other ways to fund the remaining 30 percent, according to the consultant.

- Alternative C, recommended by the city staff, would phase in the fees. Four categories would go into effect in 90 days: The first category includes parks and recreation, transportation, fire/emergency medical services and police. The remaining fee categories — arts and culture, general government, public works and sanitation — would go into effect in two years.

- Alternative D phases all categories in over three years. The first year would have fees at 70 percent, 85 percent for the second year and then 100 percent in the third year.

- Alternative E is a mixture of C and D. It would phase in the fees for parks, transportation, fire/emergency medical services and police at 70 percent in the first year. In the second year, the same categories would be at 85 percent. In the third year, all categories would be charged at 100 percent.

The parks and recreation, arts and culture and sanitation fees are charged to only residential development at different levels for single family units, multiple family units and all other housing.

Police, fire/emergency medical services, general government, public works and transportation fees are all applicable to both residential and nonresidential development.

The nonresidential development is divided into retail/shopping center, office/institutional, light industrial, warehousing, manufacturing and hotel. The fees are calculated based on square footage in most cases, except for hotels, which are per room.

The heftiest fees are for transportation and parks and recreation. Under the proposed ordinance, the council may waive fees for affordable housing, economic development and redevelopment areas.

Any fee would go into effect 90 days after its adoption by the council.

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