



Council to look at impact fee study, Eighth Street project

By Eleanor Evans Staff Writer // eleanore@nwanews.com

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BENTONVILLE — An updated impact fee study that reveals justifiable additional fees will be presented to the Bentonville City Council at its Committee-of-the-Whole meeting.

Consulting firm Tischler Bise prepared the in-depth 55-page study, which catalogues current facilities and future needs according to projected population growth.

The study recommends a decrease in police and sewer fees; all other fees are increased.

- **Police, fire, water and sewer:** These fees would be primarily used for vehicles, equipment and infrastructure based on growth and demand.
- **Parks:** The study recommends fees primarily for land improvements because the city recently purchased 139 acres off Price Coffee road for what will become the city's largest park.
- **Library:** Because the 38,000-square-foot Bentonville Public Library now under construction will provide room for future growth, the city may actually recover some of its \$2 million investment into the \$9 million project. Fees would also purchase additional materials for the library.

On Tuesday, the council will consider an agreement between the city and Wal-Mart that outlines issues about widening Southeast Eighth Street and Southwest Eighth Street.

In August, a federal transportation bill allotted \$35 million to widen the street from the Interstate 540/U. S. Hwy. 71 corridor west to Southwest Elm Tree Road.

A 20 percent match is required to receive the funding. Wal-Mart has agreed to provide that match.

Besides Wal-Mart's roughly \$6.5 million 20 percent match, the city and Bentonville Plaza LLC are each paying \$500,000 toward the project.

Before the federal funding was available, all three entities had agreed on Eighth Street improvements; now they're putting their money toward the entire project. "Wal-Mart had to step up with a significantly larger sum," Churchwell said. He plans to take suggestions from Wal-Mart, Bentonville Plaza, and other affected entities, he said. "(Wal-Mart) understands that the city is the administrator (of the funds). We'll be taking suggestions from them," he said. Brad Urhahn, a Wal-Mart engineer, is on the city's consultant selection committee, Churchwell said. "I see it as a regional project," Churchwell said. "Most Wal-Mart facilities here are on Eighth Street or very close to it."

The city will establish a separate account for Eighth Street funds.

But residents shouldn't hold their breath about Eighth Street. Studies and going to bid will take quite a while. Churchwell hopes to start moving dirt in four years — "if things went really well."

The Bentonville Committee-of-the-Whole meeting will be held at 6 p.m. on Monday in the Community Development Building at 305 S. W. A St.

The Bentonville City Council meeting will be held at 6 p.m. on Tuesday in the City Council Chambers at 115 W. Central Ave.

The council will also take action on the following items:

- A rezoning request from Agricultural (A-1) and Neighborhood Commercial (C-1) to A-1 for 10.53 acres located on the Straube Business Park, requested by Perry Butcher;
- A final plat application for Crystal Hill Terrace, located on North A Street directly north of the Holly Gardens subdivision, requested by Reagan Kirkland;
- A resolution setting a public hearing for May 23 for the Walton 5 and 10 Cent Stores vacation of alleys near the stores;
- An ordinance amending Title 7 Public Peace, Safety and Morals to regulate noise;
- The reappointment of Joan Clifford to the Tree and Landscape Committee, with a term to expire July 1, 2009;
- An update of the general plan from Planning Works;
- An ordinance adding a personnel position for the planning department and declaring an emergency; and
- Approval of an additional full-time Secretary II position to be shared by the Planning Department and

Street Engineer.

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Contact: webmaster@nwanews.com