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Parks and Rec:City should hold impact-fee study

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Sherwood's Parks and Recreation Committee voted Monday in favor of recommending to the City Council that an impact-fee study be conducted in the city.

The committee met Monday at the Bill Harmon Recreation Center, 51 Shelby Road.

Sonny Janssen, director of parks and recreation for the city, said the city's master parks plan shows the city is short on parks space for the current population by about 400 acres.

Impact fees, if instituted, would provide a new source of revenue for the city, Janssen said.

Ward 2 Alderwoman Mary Jo Heye said other Arkansas cities, such as Conway, require developers of new commercial and residential construction to pay impact fees to the city to help pay for street improvements and new parks.

An impact fee study, done by an outside consultant, should help the city evaluate how much impact fees would benefit the city and how those fees would be structured, if implemented in Sherwood, Heye said.

The Street Committee will hold a special meeting Friday to consider whether or not it will partner with the Parks and Recreation Committee in recommending the impact fee study to the City Council.

If the council passes a resolution commissioning the study, then the process should take about a year from the time a consultant is hired until the city starts collecting impact fees, Heye said. The revenue would allow the city to do more, she said.

"It'll be a step in the right direction," Heye said. "If that helps us in terms of streets, that will free up money for drainage."