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Punta Gorda weighs fee hike

Impact fees could rise by nearly \$3,000

STAFF REPORT

PUNTA GORDA -- The city is moving a step closer to raising its impact fees on single-family homes by nearly \$3,000 before the end of the year.

Officials are working on an ordinance to be presented to the public for comment in coming weeks.

Punta Gorda is considering raising fees from \$959 to \$3,796 on single-family homes and from \$962 to \$3,344 on other housing, such as condos.

The city hasn't changed its impact fees since creating them 15 years ago.

Impact fees are a one-time charge used to pay for growth-related infrastructure, such as parks, roads, and fire and police stations.

"This is growth assisting to help pay for growth," City Manager Howard Kunik said.

The proposed increase is expected to generate at least \$2.7 million per year, a consultant told the council when he presented an impact fee study this week.

During the next five years, the proposed fees would pay for several projects, including 7.9 miles of road improvements estimated at \$8.37 million, \$1.39 million for 7.5 acres for additional citywide parks, \$1.01 million to expand the fire station, \$700 to expand the police station, and \$330,000 to purchase 11 police cars estimated to cost \$330,000.

In April, the City Council asked its consultant, TischlerBise of Bethesda, Md., to revise the method for calculating fees to make the impact more fair for people who live in the city year-round. At the time, council members complained that people who live in condos are typically snowbirds who use their property six months out of the year, but the city is still required to provide services, such as parks, to account for the seasonal population.

The new proposed rates, Kunik said, are "tailored toward the demographics in Punta Gorda."
