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Westside businesses say fees discriminatory



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Businesses on Albuquerque's Westside are complaining that the impact fees instituted to defray the cost of new infrastructure are putting them at a competitive disadvantage.

"On any business, if you put too much of a load on them, they're going to have to raise their prices," said John Battaglia after being stuck with an unexpected \$37,500 impact fee as he added a storage facility to his existing carwash.

"It's a silent tax on the customer," he said. He's raised his rates \$10 and his wife has taken a job as a nurse to help defray the costs.

Business owners must pay the impact fees anytime they build or expand. The fees pay for extending roads, sidewalks, and sewer and water service to developing areas.

According to the City of Albuquerque's Website, a hypothetical business on the east side of the river would have to shell out \$9,000 in impact fees. On the Westside, a business of the same size would be stuck with an \$84,000 in fees.

Westside City Councilor Ken Sanchez is proposing an independent study of Albuquerque's impact fees be conducted. The issue is expected to be brought up before the city council on Monday.