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3 p.m. Tuesday ... Sierra Vista City Council will hold second public forum concerning proposed new impact fees

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HERALD/REVIEW

SIERRA VISTA — Tuesday is the second of two forums regarding the city's proposed new impact development fees.

The forum, designed to receive public input, is slated for 3 p.m. in City Hall.

The first forum was held Nov. 1. Mayor Tom Hessler has limited the meetings to 1 1/2 hours.

No council votes are being taken during these public forums, which are held to get the public involved in a bottom-line decision that Councilman Rick Mueller is calling one of the most important issues in recent city government history.

Private consulting firm TischlerBise recommended recently what it says are the maximum supportable development-impact fees, specific to the Sierra Vista real estate market and the city's requirements and needs for public infrastructure, to accommodate local growth and development.

However the Southern Arizona Home Builders Association said Nov. 1 that it crunched the same numbers TischlerBise did. SAHBA figured a lower maximum-supportable development-impact fee than did the private consultants, Executive Director Tom Heckendorn said.

The Greater Sierra Vista Chamber of Commerce hasn't yet taken a position regarding TischlerBise's estimates or the city's plans based on suggested rates.

The Chamber continues to gather additional information and said it is querying its members.

Various local and out-of-town developers warned the council and city staff on Nov. 1 of the potential damage overbearing fees could have on the Sierra Vista real estate market.

City staff and the Citizens Advisory Commission recommend development-impact fees as the most effective means to pay for new fire and police stations, keeping up with the city's expansion by development.

In accordance with Arizona Revised Statute, development-impact fees can only be appropriated to accommodate for growth with a city's present level of service, and cannot be used to implement new municipal services.

These one-time fees are assessed to developers, but the increased development cost traditionally trickles down to the home buyer.

TischlerBise estimated the maximum-supportable fee to be about \$6,200 for a single-family home, while SAHBA consultants for the same home estimate a maximum-supportable fee of about \$4,700.

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