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Wednesday, 03/01/06

## Alderman says city needs impact fee

Jeremy Johnson  
 Hendersonville Star News

Growth within Hendersonville and its impact particularly on schools has caused one city alderman to call for a city impact fee.

Ward 2 Alderman Jamie Clary was set to make a proposal at last night's Finance Committee meeting calling for a tax on new development to help schools within the city.

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The meeting was held after the Star News deadline for the Wednesday edition. For further coverage on the results of that

meeting, please see the Friday, March 3 edition of The Star News.

Any attempt to impose an impact fee for schools requires permission from the state, Clary said.

"The idea is property in Hendersonville is more expensive than property in other parts of the county. Because of that, the school board may decide to build a new school in another part of the county where the land is cheaper. This way we can say we have this money to help them get the land and build a road to the school or whatever other infrastructure is needed," he said.

If state officials grant the city permission to establish an impact fee, Clary said he would then seek the input of other aldermen as to how much to charge new developments and how the fee could possibly be assessed.

"That's something I want to get with the other aldermen on. I don't feel like we need to get as much as the county," he said.

The funds collected would be managed by the city and earmarked to assist the county in building new schools within the Hendersonville area as well as funding any infrastructure that would be necessary, Clary said.

"My direction is I don't want to write a check to the county because as one alderman put it, "Why wouldn't they just take the money away from us,"" he said.

Sumner County Director of Schools Benny Bills said a city impact fee for schools would be "a great asset" to the school system. Given the county's current budget situation, Bills said county and city officials should look at increasing funding for new schools by any way they can.

"I think it's a great idea and I think it's a very progressive idea on the part of Hendersonville," Bills said.

Local developer Bill Towe of Imperial Development, said he opposed the idea of city imposed impact fee on new development, saying it places an undue burden on new home buyers, many of whom do not and will not have children in the county's school system.

Towe said county officials should impose an additional tax of 37 cents per every \$100 of

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property value on property transfers and do away with the county impact fee altogether.

“That would receive a tremendous amount of money, but because it is an election year in the county they’re all going to say sock it to the people who are not here yet,” Towe said.

Sumner County currently has an adequate facilities tax on new development.

The tax is assessed at 70 cents a square foot on residential structures and 40 cents a square foot on industrial structures, said Sumner County Permit Administrator Toni Speer.

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