# Transportation Impact Fee Heads To Santa Monica City Council

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Hoping to alter the future of traffic management in Santa Monica, the Planning Commission unanimously recommended on Wednesday night that the City Council adopt a Transportation Implementation Fee (TIF), which aims to mitigate traffic in Santa Monica while furthering the goals of the Land Use and Circulation Element (LUCE).

The TIF aims to direct new developments "contribute its fair share" toward the costs in cultivating new transportation infrastructure within the city. Included in the development of alternative automobile infrastructure are increased public transit, bicycling, ridesharing, and walking.

"The purpose of our Transportation Impact Fee …… is pretty simple and straight forward. It is to make sure that new development pays its fair share of what''s necessary to mitigate new traffic in Santa Monica and to achieve the city's no new net trips goal by providing better transportation choices for everyone," Jeff Tumlin, a principal of the consulting firm Nelson Nygaard, told commissioners.

Should the council approve the TIF, it "will help offset the costs of building a robust transportation network, especially emphasizing improvements for those who walk, bicycle, and use transit, along with congestion management" and achieve the LUCE's mission of "no net new automobile trips in the PM peak hour with a Santa Monica origin or destination and, with other funding sources, can be built using fees on new development."

The fee would also be used to offset some of the costs of capital projects within Santa Monica. According to a staff report to commissioners, these capital projects, which include the development or modification of various bicycle, pedestrian, parking, transit, and related activities, would cost City Hall about $172 million over 20 years.

In terms of where the fee would be set, both staff and Tumlin suggested a range of fees contingent upon type of land use and location of the property.

For example, a single-family residence would be assessed a fee between $7,600 and $7,800, while a multi-family residence may pay between $2,600 and $3,300 per dwelling unit. Retailer may be charged between $21 and $31.10 per square foot while medical offices would have to fork out either $28.10 or $29.80 per square foot. The range for commercial tenants is between $9.70 and $10.80 per square foot.

Meanwhile, hotels, motels, inns, and other lodges may dole out $3.60 per square foot irrespective of location, and industrial-themed businesses would be assessed the lowest rate of either $1.20 or $1.30 per square foot.

Tumlin added the suggested fees might be raised if commissioners so desired. Essentially, the proposed fees would be a baseline assessment.

In all, the TIF would result in as much as $60 million in revenue, which would not cover the $172 million required for related capital projects. According to staff, the shortfall would be absorbed "regional, state and federal grants, City General Fund, and other sources, for which the Fee may provide a local match."

According to the presentation to commissioners, there are currently 60,000 vehicle trips within Santa Monica during peak afternoon and evening hours. Without the LUCE, that number would increase to nearly 65,000 by 2030, according to Tumlin. Conversely, he pointed out vehicle trips would be reduced to 59,500 by 2030 with full implementation of the LUCE.

Among the current efforts to alter transportation demands in Santa Monica within the context of the LUCE include Expo Light Rail planning, the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) requirement of certain new development, streestscape projects (such as Ocean Park Avenue), area plans (in downtown and near Bergamot Station, for example), coordinating events with schools, such as Bike It Walk It, and coordinating around the Los Angeles Marathon and Cirque du Soleil.

Planning Commissioners had opened the door to recommend the TIF to council members when it approved a resolution of intention on the issue on Feb. 8.