

[Back](#)

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Dundee Wants Road Impact Fee

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DUNDEE -- Town officials are convinced that the town needs to have a road impact fee, but they don't know how they can pay for the study their lawyer says is needed before they impose it.

Mayor Kevin Kitto said the town couldn't afford to wait another year to start collecting the transportation impact fees from developers.

"Our roads are getting worse," Kitto said, "simply because we have been neglecting them."

But an abbreviated version of the impact fee study comes with a \$20,000 price tag, which officials say the town can't afford right now.

A full-blown or master plan on transportation could cost up to \$100,000, said Steve Alias, an engineer with the Winter Havenbased engineering firm Envisors.

Town Council members last week debated the issue at a special workshop and will decide at their meeting May 19 whether to accept the recommendation by the town's lawyer and the consulting engineers to go ahead with the study.

Impact fees are collected by counties and municipalities to pay for the increase of services required by growth.

The mayor proposed collecting a temporary fee from developers while the plan is designed, but Town Attorney John Murphy advised him not to.

Murphy said a study would set standards and provide data on projected growth allowing the town to set impact fees that won't be challenged in court.

Commissioner Waymon Meadows disagreed.

"Why pay \$20,000 for a study when we already know what to do?" Meadows said.

How to pay for the study hasn't been settled. The council would have to examine how to pay for the plan.

"There are no funds to do that," Finance Director Larry McNabb said, after being asked by Town Manager Jim Gallagher whether a temporary loan from the general fund could be considered.

A master plan would detail the town's most frequented roads and those expected to have an

increase in traffic in the next few years.

The town hired Envisors to develop the master plan for assorted water and sewerage improvements that was unanimously approved earlier this year.

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