

Impact fee established in Liberty

Funds part of effort to prepare for growth

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The city of Liberty has established an impact fee for new commercial projects in an effort to prepare for future growth, a city leader said.

City Council approved on final reading an ordinance to create a \$1,400 impact fee for new commercial projects, including newly constructed [businesses](#), multifamily residences and apartments but not single family or duplex residential, said Mayor Michael Sheriff.

The measure was approved, 4-1, with Councilman Josh Harrison against, one councilman absent and former Councilman Rick Clark's seat still vacant, Sheriff said.

Harrison said he understands the reasoning and need for the impact fee but would have preferred the city to not implement the fee as an incentive and a way to attract new businesses.

"Each business that would come in does have an impact on our sewer, police, fire, everything, the services that we provide," he said. "I understand that. I did not support it [simply](#) because I wanted to use that maybe as a selling point for Liberty to invite businesses to say that we didn't have it."

Sheriff said that the impact fee was considered as officials look "at the cost of new development, the cost to the city to provide the infrastructure and provide the services" and that it's "basically an offset fee to cover the impact of our expense."

He has said, "We do not have a lot of commercial development at this time, but we are putting it in place for future growth."

The ordinance breaks the fee down with \$100 each for storm water, police, water, fire, sanitation and recreation impact and \$800 for the sewer impact.

According to the ordinance, "current growth projections indicate that increasing demands will be placed upon the city to provide necessary infrastructure and facilities."

It said that "additional capital facilities will be required to maintain current or targeted levels of service."

Some other communities in Pickens County have impact fees for commercial and residential developments, while others don't have such fees, officials have said.

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