

What people don't know, will hurt them.

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**Peachtree City leaders get conflicting advice on impact fees**

2009-08-10

By [Trey Alverson](#)

Peachtree City is inching closer to changing how much it charges for the infrastructure related impact fees that are designed to pay for public safety, recreation and library capital projects associated with new development.

The city staff and outside consultant Bill Ross of Ross and Associates presented the council with several options during Thursday's first public hearing, ultimately recommending a new city-wide impact fee schedule that would increase rates across all types of new developments to the "maximum fee that could be assessed under state law."

The city currently charges impact fees only for new residential development, a practice it began in 1992. Also, the amount a builder must pay currently differs based on where the new development is located within the city.

Under the new staff-recommended ordinance, Peachtree City would adopt a single city-wide rate for residential impact fees. New commercial and industrial developments would also have to pay impact fees -- a first for the city.

"What was adopted in the early 1990's is what we're proposing to change today," said David Rast, the city's interim community development director.

"Quite honestly, we have left a lot of money on the table that should have been collected to support new growth because we've failed to adjust the impact fees for inflation and we've never imposed fees on commercial, office or industrial developments."

The new fee schedule endorsed by both city staff and Ross will purportedly generate \$6.8 million in revenue for capital public safety, recreation and library projects over the next 20 years.

"Without this revenue source, that equates to 0.20 extra mils per year in property taxes for these capital projects," Ross explained.

The mayor and council initially directed staff to re-examine the city's current impact fee ordinance following the annexation of properties into the city's West Village. In addition to bringing in Ross, the city formed an impact fee committee to study proposed changes.

Dan Petry, a member of both the impact fee committee and the Homebuilder's Association of Midwest Georgia, disagreed with staff and Ross' recommendation.

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"The housing industry is completely on its back and now the 'solution' is to raise impact fees?" Petry rhetorically asked the council.

"In some areas of the city, this will essentially triple the impact fee."

The recommended maximum allowable fee is \$3,446.40 for each new dwelling unit.

Staff also presented alternative plans that would cap impact fees at 75 percent and 50 percent of the maximum allowable impact fee.

It was unclear Thursday which plan had the city council's support.

A vote on the matter is scheduled for the Sept. 3 meeting.



## We Welcome your Comments

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