

White House reduces impact fees

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The City of White House has voted to drastically reduce its impact fees in a ploy by local leaders to spark business and residential development.

After promising to eliminate impact fees in his recent State of the City address, Mayor Mike Arnold presented the Municipal Planning Commission with a resolution to reduce the city's impact fees to 10 percent of the current rate. At the May 14 meeting, the commission unanimously voted in favor of it. At the monthly meeting of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen on May 17, the city also voted in favor of the fee reductions.

The city impact fee is a charge the local government applies to a new development. The money goes toward providing services for that new development. Currently, the impact fee for a residential building project is \$1,245 per house, a rate that will now be reduced to \$124.50 (commercial rates vary). Arnold is hoping that a reduction in the fee will lure developers who might have previously been on the fence about building in the city.

When more residents move to town, more major businesses will follow, bringing in more revenue, Arnold said.

"We're making an effort to try to promote some growth in White House," Arnold said. "We're not going to grow if we don't get more rooftops."

Planning Commissioner Paula Eller voiced her support for the idea, pointing out that the reduction will not deal major damage to the city's budget.

"We're not talking about losing a lot in impact fees because [right now] we're not getting a lot," Eller said.

Arnold told the commission that he's been in talks with developers that have said they would be more likely to build if they were given a concession like this one.

"I want to call their hand," Arnold said.

The impact fee reduction was only approved for two years.