

Development Impact Fees –
October 9, 2014 Mayor and Council Meeting

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS - September 9, 2014 Public Hearing

Connie McMahan, Metropolitan Pima Alliance (MPA)

The MPA represents over 130 companies that consist primarily of real estate and development businesses, and they have a history of supporting impact fees. At this time, they recommend exploring other alternatives to impact fees. Until other alternatives can be implemented, they recommend setting the fees at the lowest rates feasible, and that any increases be phased-in as the market improves. They suggest an economic trigger or a time-period phase-in for any fee increases. Regarding the IIP reports and ten-year project lists, they believe the projects in the lists likely won't all be built in the next 10 years, and that the projected increases in population (in the Land Use Assumptions Report) are overly ambitious.

David Godlewski, Southern Arizona Homebuilders Association (SAHBA)

Mr. Godlewski voiced several concerns, and referred to a letter to the City that identified those concerns. Housing affordability is an important issue, and impact fees contribute to reduced housing affordability. The reports on which the fees were based don't sufficiently demonstrate the benefit of the listed projects to new development. Regarding the Streets IIP report, 14 miles of new lane miles were added, yet insufficient justification was provided for the increase. The amount new development will pay for many of the Streets projects increased from 50% to 75%, but no justification for the increase was provided. Regarding the Parks IIP, there are no existing parks in the Southlands Service Area, therefore the existing level of service is zero, yet there's a proposed parks fee of \$218 per single-family residential unit based on the existing level of service. The grandfathering of \$0 impact fees for projects approved until October 9, 2014, should be extended until December 23, 2014. SAHBA opposes the proposed fees.

Chris Gans, citizen

Mr. Gans supports the proposed impact fees. He said the current infrastructure is deteriorating, and this is a quality of life issue for neighborhoods. The West University Neighborhood that he lives in has had four large new student housing developments in the past two years, but there were insufficient infrastructure improvements constructed to address the impacts of those projects. They need new sidewalks, bike lanes and parks to service the new development. Regarding the Streets IIP, he isn't convinced the streetcar extension along Campbell Avenue and west to the Tohono T'adai Transit Center is in the best location; maybe it ought to run northward along 6th Avenue instead.

Suzanne Schaeffer, citizen

Ms. Schaeffer said the construction of new homes and buildings is not sustainable economic development, and that sustainability is important for the City's future. We should focus on investing in existing buildings and public infrastructure. We don't need to keep impact fees low.