

Impact fee measure wins OK from city

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The Seguin City Council created a new source of funds for road repairs during Tuesday's meeting.

The measure, which passed unanimously, implements road impact fees in various parts of town to offset the cost of repair to current roads — and potential new roads. The ordinance would implement a fee for anyone who puts in new developments in the designated areas.

"These are fees that would be paid by developers at the time of (returning a) building permit," Assistant Director of Planning and Codes John Foreman said. "This is not a new toll or tax on existing residence. Really it is a way for developments to begin to offset some of the costs that they're placing on that infrastructure that the current citizens are now paying. It's a way of funding these improvements and having development pay more of its fair share."

Foreman's department, with the help of construction firm Kimley-Horn, conducted studies before finalizing the ordinance, Foreman said.

* "The study determined the maximum fee that the city could charge based on those projects, the amount of growth and the service areas," he said. "There is a fee and calculation depending on the land use that actually determines what's assessed."

The impact fee is a one-time payment for each development, Foreman said.

"It's paid when the building permit is pulled just like a sewer or water impact fee," he said. "The new ordinance adds roadway impact fees in the same sections that have water and sewer impact fees. We've added some new definitions to make it workable."

Mayor Don Keil said the impact fee will provide a much needed additional source of income to address road repairs.

"I think a perfect example of why this is need is if you go to Mill Creek Crossing and Rudeloff Road," he said. "It's an ideal example of why we need this to happen. That area has been developed fairly rapidly. There is a lot of industrial users along the road too, and basically it's an old farm-to-market road with some gravel and some tar on it. It's been used very heavily. I think even gravel trucks have been diverting on to that coming back and forth from New Braunfels."

Several roads on the outskirts of town are not in ideal condition, Keil said.

“We have had help with the MPO (Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization) obviously on that road, but the rest of it has to be funded completely from taxpayer pockets from all over the city,” he said. “If we had impact fees in place, quite a bit of that could’ve been handled by those impact fees.”

The motion was put forward by District 7 Councilwoman Donna Dodgen and seconded by District 1 Councilman Ernest Leal.

“It’s going to help fund those things we don’t have funding for now,” Dodgen said. “It’s just like what we’ve done with our water and our sewer. It helps pay for potentially what (developers) are going to be using. It’s a really nice funding mechanism, and it makes us and developers, businesses and people who come in invested in our community.”