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Centerville considers hiking park impact fee

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Centerville officials are considering a possible increase in park impact fees to fund future additions and upgrades to trails and community green spaces.

The city's draft capital improvement master plan for parks identified \$3 million in future improvements and expansions that could be funded by park impact fees.

But the current \$1,200 impact fee paid by developers would lead to a shortfall of \$1.2 million if Centerville reached build-out by adding 1,486 living units.

"We've done enough analysis to show that our current impact fee will not cover the whole cost of future improvements that could be attributable to growth," said Centerville City Manager Steve Thacker.

According to the city's preliminary impact fee analysis, 15,335 people live in Centerville and the population will top out at about 20,000 when remaining available land is developed.

Under state law, municipalities can charge impact fees to developers for parks, recreation facilities, open space and trails if the charges can be reasonably linked to needs generated by new growth. Park impact fees can be used to sustain current service levels.

Centerville has 86.5 acres of parkland; 64.5 are developed, 22 are not.

To maintain current service levels at build-out, Centerville needs to add 19.6 developed and 6.7 undeveloped park acres.

The city's initial analysis indicates that a \$3,104 parks impact fee could be justified.

On Tuesday, the City Council decided to update its park facilities plan and pursue further impact fee analysis. However, feelings were mixed about increasing fees under present economic conditions.

"I would be concerned in the current housing market to impose additional costs to developers," Mayor Ronald Russell said.

Layton-based U.S. Development Inc. recently purchased a permit to build 158 residential units in the new mixed-use Legacy Crossing project sprouting on Centerville's west side and paid \$1,200 per unit, Thacker said.

“New residential units would be the only ones impacted,” Thacker said. “But this is a long way from actually being adopted.”

The consulting firm of Lewis Young Robertson and Burningham is reviewing Centerville’s culinary water and storm drainage impact fees and could be asked to examine the city’s park impact fees, Thacker said.

According to the U.S. Census, Centerville’s population grew by 5.1 percent from 2000 to 2010.

Bountiful grew 3 percent to 42,522 from 2000 to 2010 and has survived without imposing impact fees for parks, streets or public safety services, said City Manager Tom Hardy. However, he said there’s a simple explanation.

“Our city has grown very slowly,” Hardy said, “and we were able to put infrastructure in place in advance of that growth.”

Hardy has managed Bountiful for close to three decades and said he has seen the addition of two 10-acre parks during that time, along with restroom and playground upgrades in every city park over the past six years.

“Residents already pay property, sales and franchise taxes,” Hardy said, “and we feel we can use those and make do.”

In nearby West Bountiful, park impact fees top out at \$3,030 for a new single family home. The small city of 5,265 saw 17 percent population growth between 2000 and 2010.

A 2008 study adjusted all of the city’s impact fees upward, said City Administrator Craig Howe.

Howe points to the planned paving of a 1.5-mile stretch connecting Prospector Trail to the 14-mile Legacy Parkway trail that stretches into Salt Lake City as one example of how the fees are used to enhance quality of life in West Bountiful.

A state grant will reimburse the city for half of the \$200,000 in construction costs, Howe said, work he expects to finish by spring.

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Park impact fees, Davis County select cities

Bountiful • \$0

Centerville • \$1,200 for all residential dwellings

Farmington • \$2,000 multifamily, \$3,000 single family

Kaysville • \$1,212 multifamily, \$1,620 single family

Layton • \$1,381 multifamily, \$1,873 single family

North Salt Lake • medium to high density \$1,800, low density \$2,200

West Bountiful • multifamily \$2,616, single family \$3,030

Woods Cross • multifamily \$2,078, single family \$2,550

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