

City sets final date for change in impact fees

By CAROLYN DRYER, Editor | Posted: Wednesday, April 9, 2014 1:42 pm

City council heard from staff at its April 1 meeting regarding a proposed new impact fee ordinance.

Deputy Director of Finance and Budget Katie Gregory told council the new ordinance is “a pretty significant update” to the city’s ordinance. It contains new and updated impact fee levels for all developments within the city.

Council will meet May 6 to give the ordinance final approval.

Changes to the ordinance are required as a result of legislation that was passed into law July 2011. A draft study was presented Oct. 10, 2013, and in October and November, city staff met with stakeholders who will be affected by the ordinance.

The city’s notice of intent (for new development to pay its fair share) and final draft was posted Dec. 6 on the city website. A public hearing was held Jan. 7, followed by a Feb. 4 council study session.

The new ordinance contains standards and procedures, with definitions, service areas, authority and requirements. Program administration has adoption and update procedures, credits, appeals and refunds procedures. Oversight is continual and the city is required to file annual reports with the city clerk and conduct a certified biennial audit with public hearings.

Gregory said the ordinance follows Model City standards. Fees and service areas are related to impact fees. In the new ordinance, there is a 48 percent reduction of impact fees on developments south of Bell Road, and no parks fees. North of Pinnacle Peak Road, there is an 8 percent reduction in fees. West of Agua Fria Freeway, there is a 3 percent increase in fees, most significantly in the area of water resources. In the northwest part of the city, there are increases for commercial development.

The new ordinance is expected to go into effect Aug. 1.

Councilmember Cathy Carlat, whose northernmost area of the city will feel the increases more significantly than south Peoria, said impact fees were originally put in place for growth to pay for itself.

“Unfortunately,” she said, “the Legislature no longer feels that way.”

She complimented city staff on working with all stakeholders on “a very complex matter handled in a very organized way.”

Vice Mayor Ron Aames said, “This was a lot of work, a lot of people, could help with our bottom line.”