



## Council renews interest in fee on development

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CORPUS CHRISTI — The City Council showed a renewed interest in instituting an impact fee on new development Tuesday, asking for an update about the process to do so.

Councilman Michael McCutcheon brought up the issue during an item about buying for \$254,066 a 1.7 acre for continuation of the drainage channel that serves the city's growing Southside.

"We need to get those on the books," McCutcheon said. "And start collecting impact fees so the burden of new development, drainage from the new areas for example, are not put on the shoulders of the general taxpayer. Instead when you develop a new area, the people buying in that area are paying for the infrastructure in that area."

Impact fees were recommended in a consultant report in December 2006. The fees, which would be significant, are designed to fund adjustments to existing infrastructure such as utilities, storm water drainage and streets that are needed as the city grows.

The city is currently updating its master plans for drainage, said City Manager Skip Noe, which is a first step to instituting impact fees, a process that could take 2 to 4 years to implement.

A report on that process is expected in a month with information on intermediate steps to consider and the trust funds now set up to reimburse developers for some infrastructure costs.

In other business Tuesday, the council:

-- Approved \$1.9 million contract with MEI Maverick Engineering Inc for design, bid and construction observation work on a street reconstruction project on North Port Avenue from Interstate 37 to US Highway 181. The project, done in conjunction with the Texas Department of Transportation, is expected to go into the construction phase in November.

-- Heard a brief update from the CVB on its nature tourism initiative.

Ted Eubanks, a consultant, told the council Corpus Christi should be positioned to become the place to play, "Texas' playground from a natural perspective."

That tourism draw can translate into population growth when quality-of-life improvements lure tourists to relocate here or help recruit companies, he said.



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