

Pending projects face impact fees

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Littleton City Council will vote Aug. 20 on whether to start charging developers fees to help offset the impacts their projects have on the community.

It's a timely discussion, as decisions on two major projects are scheduled to happen before that. On July 30, council will vote on the controversial Broadstone project proposed for the southwest corner of Littleton Boulevard and Bemis Street. City staff recommended that council approve it, while the city's planning board unanimously rejected it on June 25.

The board and staff agreed on July 6 that Littleton Village, the long-anticipated project for the old Marathon Oil site, should be approved. Council will vote on that one Aug. 6.

City Manager Michael Penny says because the impact fee is collected when the developer pulls the building permit, all projects currently pending in the city will pay.

"No applicant is at that stage, so everyone pays from here forward," he said. "It is our stance that no project can avoid the pending impact fees."

He explains that Colorado also has a pending-ordinance doctrine, so the fees would apply to any application on the table when council approved the legislation creating them on first reading on July 16.

"The short answer is, under the ordinance as presented, all projects in the pipeline would have to pay the fees," he said.

He said credit will be given to any developer who has already paid a public-facilities fee or the open-space fee, which these new fees will replace if approved.

BBC Research and Consulting says Littleton should be charging impact fees of \$5,274 per dwelling unit for residential construction, and \$1,811 per 1,000 square feet of commercial.

"In light of renewed interest in development and the prospect of considerable future development activity, the city council is considering development impact fees as part of its larger strategy to ensure that growth pays its own way and that existing residents and existing services are not financially burdened by new growth," writes BBC's Ford Frick in the recommendation.

The money can only be used for expansion of capital assets necessary due to growth, not maintenance. Littleton is mostly built out, so there likely will be more and more infill projects as developable land runs out. According to BBC, redevelopment will be charged only for net new space added.

If the Littleton Village plan is approved, it could bring roughly \$4.7 million in residential fees and \$450,000 in commercial fees to the city's coffers.

Residential projects already approved this year include Nevada Place (72 units) and Littleton Commons (385). Under consideration are Littleton Village (900), Villages of Belleview (346), Broadstone at Littleton Station

(250) and Meadows at Platte Canyon (250). If they all get approved under the proposed fee structure, the total could be more than \$11 million.