

Tacoma Permit Advisory Task Force
Virtual meeting
Meeting #24 – May 13, 2021, 10:30am

Task Force Members in attendance: Jim Dugan; Layne Alfonso; Joshua Jorgensen; Ben Ferguson; John Wolters; Clinton Brink; Jason Gauthier; Claude Remy; Justin Goroch; Mandy McGill; Chuck Sundsmo
Excused: Jim Collins; Michael R. Fast; Jessica Gamble; Lacey Hatch; Evan Mann; Kim Nakamura

10:33 AM: Welcome

10:37 AM: Icebreaker.

10:39 AM: Approval of meeting minutes

Layne Alfonso moves, Mandy McGill seconds, minutes approved.

10:41 AM: Impact Fees meeting #2

Jennifer Kammerzell presents PowerPoint 1.

Prompts:

- What is missing from the notes or minutes provided?
- What are your top 5 concerns?

Questions for clarifications (as opposed to committee discussion).

- Ben Ferguson: It would be very helpful if you can outline what types of projects are being considered for impact fees and how are the fees being based? As an example, in residential is it a single family home, multi family, large projects, small projects, DADU in backyard, what if they were remodeling a garage and turning it into a DADU? Commercial projects, industrial projects, residential projects? How much fee are you talking about being added for different project types? Housing vs. industrial, how do you determine what the metric is? What is magnitude?
Jennifer: as far as what types of projects, this is where it's hard because we are coming to you early and those haven't been identified. It goes back to Council priorities. We're going to analyze all the things in the next phase. We're outlining that these are potential pieces, but we're not saying what we're going with.
- John Walters: This first phase, it's only a gathering of concerns and detail. Are you asking us to support this first phase? Are you asking us to support information gathering. Jennifer: I'm not asking for support, I'm asking for feedback and what your concerns may be. The feedback that was provided in first meeting and post meeting and being able to group them in categories is really helpful to understand what information we'd need to provide as we start moving forward. We don't want to miss anything, we want to keep it as a partnership with you all.
- Layne Alfonso: When we look at impact fees, what is it you're trying to capture? Is there a funding gap and what is that gap? What specifically is the problem you're trying to solve that suggests an impact fee might solve? Second question, why is Fire part of this and what's the problem an impact fee is trying to solve from the Fire Department? Is the feeling the current taxes collected are insufficient to cover the basic need? Jennifer: it really is about the growth, we anticipate for 60% growth in development. We know current funding does not come close to addressing future need. Layne: I'd love a goal, specific numbers. How much money are they short annually?

- Kurtis Kingsolver: those are incredibly fair questions and this process needs to answer those questions. We need to be careful how much revenue we're short. We're not going to generate enough money with an impact fee and we shouldn't to solve all the problems for Tacoma with those fees. It's a double edge sword, if we came in with a number it would be considered pre-determined and folks would be frustrated. It's not just about revenue, it's about predictability and consistency for development. We want to know what folks are seeing to find blind spots and prevent problems.
- Mandy McGill: It's hard when everything is so ambiguous and we want to give very good feedback. It's hard to do that. You mentioned the Human Right's Commission, can you specify what other groups? Jennifer: HRC, Commission on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, Latino, this is a small scale but it's a starting point. Out of this report we'll figure out who else we need to engage and have that be part of the report. Mandy: Are you giving them the same overview you're giving us? Jennifer: in general yes, but in different terms. Giving them enough information to understand.
- Chuck Sundsmo: What Ben and Layne said about the purpose. I'm really challenged looking at a study done in 2015 or pre-COVID for transportation. I don't know if any of those components have been factored in for transportation.
- Ben Ferguson: Why weren't water and sewer and maybe power and storm included in infrastructure fee discussion? Jennifer: they're definitely part of the conversation because we want to know what fees might stack on to development, but by state law they're not eligible for impact fees. We are working with utilities. Ben: If we're looking at big picture, there're things that Council and governments right now have decided are crises. I don't think traffic flows are considered a crises in the area. Jennifer: from a transportation perspective, it's definitely one from the past but it's definitely one to continue with and important to a lot of communities.

11:00 AM: Discussion

Layne Alfonso: I'm not opposed to impact fees automatically, however I would like to better understand what the problem is, where that money is going, put some guard rails on those impact fees. I would not be in support of impact fees that go to the general fund and the City gets to decide what they want to spend it on each time. I'd like to clarify having more specificity.

Clint Brink: I agree with Ben and Layne, it's hard to provide feedback at this early stage. I want to thank Jennifer for presenting early. The earlier we can be made aware and get our impact in the better. Hopefully we'll have the opportunity to revisit later when there's a more definite outline of what's being proposed. There are three things I would look for: first is obviously cost, with the affordable housing crises you can't have your cake and eat it to. The more this cost the less affordable housing will be built. Second, predictability. It's hard to know if your project is going to pencil or what the timeline will be. Third, simplicity. How easy is it to push this through. Uniformity as well. Is a lot on one side of the City going to have more fees than those on the other. It's important to know that at the outset.

Jim: there is a request I heard to have folks come back when things are resolved so the Task Force can provide a second layer of feedback.

Justin Goroach: Layne touched on a big one, what is the problem we're solving with impact fees? How does that shake out with specifics?

Ben Ferguson: Concerns that Council sent staff on a path that doesn't solve the problem. Statement has been made that we need to plan for growth. Impact fees might be a part of this, but it shouldn't start with impact fees. It makes sense to spend money on things that a building can't bear on its own. If you

build a building in Tacoma, you have to do an upstream analysis of the storm system to figure out if your building breaks the storm system and if there's capacity for you. This seems like a place where an impact fee makes sense, because the cost of it would be born equally. Another challenge I'm aware of in Tacoma, if you're mid-block on one of the flat streets, there is likely no storm sewer to your building. If you're on a number street it's easy to connect to it. This seems like something an impact fee could solve. This isn't allowed for either of these things. Other concern, is we already of processes, levies and bonds, to fund some of these things. I don't see why we should be adding on another revenue stream when we already have opportunities as a community to support or not support those things. Finally, we have a limited amount of money to spend on a project before it's no longer viable. Government should look at how much money can be spent on a project and where that's best spent.

Chuck Sundsmo: I think the impact fees have been beaten to death. I don't know if there's a need in the City that already has infrastructure in place. It feels like we're wasting a lot of time on something we shouldn't.

John Wolters: We've asked a lot of questions, and we've received no answers yet, so we cannot make a decision. They have all the questions that we've asked, I don't think today we brought up anything new.

Layne Alfonso: I think it came out, but I want to make sure that it would be nice of the City to look at the fees that developers are impacted with, that they look at the comprehensive/collectively. It's death by a thousand cuts. It would be a good exercise to look at all the fees. Lastly, we heard fire a bunch of times, I want to reiterate, I don't think Fire is on the call, it would be nice to understand from that perspective why they would see a need for an impact fee at all.

Mandy McGill: We spent a lot of time talking about this, so what aren't we talking about? I appreciate them coming to us and being a part of that, but I think it's important to all of us to talk about what we aren't doing because we're talking about this.

11:40 AM: Statement from Task Force on Impact Fees

Jim: Jim will draft a statement and work with staff to send it out for review and comments. Task Force members are asked to verify all of the items that you know need to be resolved for consideration of impact fees.

11:45 AM: New items of interest

Staff shared that this will be a standing agenda item. Staff will use this time to highlight upcoming issues at the City that the Task Force may want to consider. The Task Force will be responsible for deciding if they adjust their upcoming schedule to address emergent policy issues.

Terry Forslund shared the environmental action plan update. Staff and the leadership team will work together to understand timelines and what role the Task Force may play in reviewing this item.

11:52 AM: Final comments

Terry: thank you for your time.

11:55 AM: Adjourned