



February 10, 2011
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PRESS RELEASE

Sumner's Delayed Impact Fees Now in Effect

Sumner, WA—New developments in Sumner now get a break when it comes to paying system development charges for water and sewer as well as transportation impact fees. Project applicants can now pay those fees just before final inspection is needed. Before, the fees were due at the time a building permit was issued.

Cities charge these fees to developments to mitigate their impact on the existing infrastructure for water, sewer and roads. However, a development won't impact the systems greatly while under construction, only when occupied and operational. Representatives from the local building industry pointed out that under the old system, projects had to pay significant interest on the financing for these fees before they could hope to recoup any costs by being operational.

One reason the City used to collect fees very early in the process was to also protect City time used to process and review project applications. Under this new system, any project choosing the delayed fee option must pay a \$250 service charge up front. This charge is credited toward the project's final fee payment.

“We need to do what we can to protect and encourage good jobs for our citizens,” said Mayor Dave Enslow. “This program makes sense: it still protects the city's resources while it also helps new businesses from having to go so far into the hole financially before they can even be up and running. The old system was similar to requiring families to pay interest on their mortgage a whole year before they could move into their home.”

The Sumner City Council unanimously approved the changes at the Council Meeting on January 18, 2011. This pilot program is in affect for a two-year trial, applicable to construction permit applications received by Sumner between January 1, 2011 and December 31, 2012. However, the Washington State Legislature is currently considering legislation that would require when cities can collect these fees, which would negate Sumner's program.

“We hope the State allows us the flexibility to continue working with our business community to find solutions that work best for all of us here in Sumner,” said City Administrator Diane Supler.

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