



---

April 19, 2023

## IMPACT FEE STUDY STAKEHOLDER QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

### Stakeholder Questions – 3/24/23 Meeting

#### Stakeholder Question #1

**Post-pandemic numbers are a concern. How did we reach that decision point to use the 2020-2022 permit data?**

- The City considered utilizing both the 5 years and the last 3 years of building permits in 2021 when the Impact Fee discussion was initiated. As with many studies, staff, and consultants provide various options and recommendations utilizing best practices. In addition, staff briefed the City Council on the study in 2021, 2022, and 2023. At the March 9, 2021, City Council meeting the presentation included both 5 years and 3 years. At that meeting, TischlerBise provided an explanation regarding both approaches and that the impact fees were based on the three-year model. To date, staff has continued to utilize the data supported by the last three years.

#### Stakeholder Question #2

**How do the construction costs of the police training facility, justify extraordinary circumstances, because there is a bond?**

- The City has bonded for \$11.3 million of the cost to construct the training facility and that is accounted for in the study. A credit has been included to the impact fee in order to prevent future development from paying twice for the training facility and shooting range (impact fee and annual debt payments). The justification for extraordinary circumstances is multi-faceted. The City has been experiencing exponential population growth and as a result a corresponding increase in demand for services. The City is also not immune to the extraordinary inflation for goods and services experienced by certainly the state and the nation over the past several years. The current staffing level is substandard as compared to cities of comparable size, and, we do not have adequate training facilities for the police department. In addition, as the city adds uniformed police officers to serve the needs of the city, those officers require equipment including vehicles and body cameras. Our impact fees have not been increased since 2013. We don't even have a mechanism that allows the impact fees to keep pace with inflation. This means that the adequacy of the fee to mitigate the impact of development has continued to decline over time. The City needs the impact fee revenue to mitigate the impact of the new development so that city resources can then be allocated for costs not covered by impact fees, such as hiring police officers or personnel.

City of Port St. Lucie  
Planning & Zoning Department  
121 SW Port St. Lucie Blvd., Bldg B  
Port St. Lucie, Florida 34984-5099  
772.871.5213  
www.cityofpsl.com



Bethany L. Grubbs  
Planner III  
772.344.4362  
[bgrubbs@cityofpsl.com](mailto:bgrubbs@cityofpsl.com)

**How do the construction costs of the police training facility, justify extraordinary circumstances, because there is a bond? (Continued)**

- The police training facility has not gone to bid yet; however, the Opinion of Probable Costs dated July 7, 2022, estimates the cost of the facility at approximately \$24.7 million. This means that the \$11.3 million bond will not cover the cost to construct the facility. More importantly, the facility is only one component of the fee. There are vehicles, software, body cams, etc. that need to be purchased to meet the requirements of state statutes and to be provided to new officers.

**Stakeholder Question #3**

**The Parks Master Plan shows 5-acre sites where the City is to locate infill parks. What is the City's plan to acquire the land and develop these infill parks?**

- The parks impact fee program will fund the recreation and park facilities needed to serve infill development. The City acquires properties as opportunities arise in developed areas. Having the appropriate resources in place to acquire land for parks will assist the city in moving quickly to capitalize on opportunities. Similar to other infrastructure improvements, (bridges, roadway expansions etc...) the City acquires property lot by lot over time.

**Stakeholder Question #4**

**The study does not include McCarty Ranch and any other state or county facility within the city limits. Why were they not considered?**

- The study includes all City-owned facilities designated as parks. It is best practice to calculate impact fee levels of service using infrastructure owned and operated by a local government. Yes, we included McCarty Ranch in the level of service analysis. We included 600 acres as a park which is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan allocation of 600 acres of this site as a park.

**Stakeholder Question #5**

**Will there be a different consideration for the infill lots?**

- No. The study looked at the city properties comprehensively. New development on infill lots provides additional demand for general government, law enforcement, and park infrastructure.

**Stakeholder Question #6**

**How will you implement the master plan with 5-acre infill lots in a built-out city?**

- The Master Plan will be implemented utilizing a combination of land acquisition, accepting land donations, and activating existing City-owned lands for parks. As vacant properties are identified

City of Port St. Lucie  
Planning & Zoning Department  
121 SW Port St. Lucie Blvd., Bldg B  
Port St. Lucie, Florida 34984-5099  
772.871.5213  
www.cityofpsl.com



Bethany L. Grubbs  
Planner III  
772.344.4362  
[bgrubbs@cityofpsl.com](mailto:bgrubbs@cityofpsl.com)

and become available, PSLPRD will seek direction from City Council on the desire to acquire additional properties. 5 acres was a minimum recommendation, based on the expertise of our consultant, of what would be required to construct a neighborhood park facility if the City were able to acquire infill lots as designated on the LOS map.

### **Stakeholder Information Requests – 3/24/23 Meeting**

**Provide the balances of the impact fee accounts. Provide the five-year CIP.**

- All development impact fee-funded capital projects should be programmed through the City's five-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Using a CIP can help the City identify and direct its fee revenue to public facilities projects that will accommodate future development. By programming fee revenues to specific capital projects, the City can help ensure a reasonable relationship between new development and the use of fee revenues.
  - **The City's CIP showing programmed projects is attached, along with a copy of the CIP expenditures for the last 3 years.** The impact fee account balances are as follows as of 4/10/23: **Law Enforcement (\$1,621,831.77)**, **Public Buildings (\$4,753,529.80)**, **Parks and Recreation (\$10,797,544.72)**.

### **Stakeholder Follow-Up Questions – E-mail 4/6/23**

#### **Stakeholder Follow-Up Question #1**

**Has consideration been given to the possibility that growth demonstrated in sample areas during the pandemic does not match recent trends and may not be reliably predicted to continue into the future?**

- The growth projected is an average of the last 3 years. The city has 46,000 single-family lots/units approved but not yet built. The Southwest Annexation Area is only 30% built out relative to residential units at this time. Given this construction-ready supply of lots and the continued migration into Florida, combined with the desirability of the region we anticipate continued growth. We intend to review the impact fees every 4 years moving forward as permitted by state statute and we believe this will enable the city to respond to any future changes in development trends in a responsive manner.

#### **Stakeholder Follow-Up Question #2**

**Since we have a bond on the new Law Enforcement Training Facility building in Tradition, but we don't currently have a bid on it, how are extraordinary circumstances being proven for this building? This is a similar question to the above.**

City of Port St. Lucie  
Planning & Zoning Department  
121 SW Port St. Lucie Blvd., Bldg B  
Port St. Lucie, Florida 34984-5099  
772.871.5213  
www.cityofpsl.com



Bethany L. Grubbs  
Planner III  
772.344.4362  
[bgrubbs@cityofpsl.com](mailto:bgrubbs@cityofpsl.com)

- Extraordinary circumstances are being demonstrated for the Law Enforcement impact fees as a whole identified in the study. This question is similar to question number 2 from the virtual stakeholder meeting answered above. The city has bonded for \$11.3 million of the cost to construct the training facility and that is accounted for in the study. A credit has been included in the impact fee in order to prevent future development for paying twice for the training facility and shooting range (impact fee and annual debt payments). In addition, question 5 below also answers this question.

### **Stakeholder Follow-Up Question #3**

**What's the reasoning behind citing national standards to base our police staffing levels, when Florida isn't likely to align with national crime levels?**

- We cite the national standard of 2.1 officers per 1,000 residents to make a comparison to the existing level of service of 1.2 officers per 1,000 residents. The existing level of service is less than the City Council standard of 1.6 officers per 1,000 residents (suspended). Port St. Lucie does not currently meet local or national standards and limiting the law enforcement impact fees will further reduce the existing level of service. The City needs the impact fee revenue to mitigate the impact of the new development so that city resources can then be allocated for costs not covered by impact fees, such as hiring police officers or personnel.

### **Stakeholder Follow-Up Question #4**

**Why were certain designated and approved parks and recreation areas in the Southern Grove region, areas are already identified on approved site plans yet not formally dedicated to the City, not included in the Extraordinary Circumstances study. These parks and recreation areas would clearly affect the calculation with regard to the amount of land needed for Parks and Recreation (stated at 188 acres at \$407,800 per acre)?**

- The acreage of parks that developers are obligated to provide to the city as part of their annexation agreements were in fact accounted for as part of the analysis which is why the projected need for additional land is not more than 188 acres. The proposed inclusion of the 188 acres is in fact conservative because even with this acreage the City will still have a reduction in the Level of Service.

### **Stakeholder Follow-Up Question #5**

**What are the "extraordinary circumstances" that is driving the City to implement the increased impact fees before June 30th, 2023? Why the rush?**

- The City has been working on the impact fee study since 2019. The study was put on hold during the work on mobility fees and then again as the City worked to resolve the solid waste problem. The work on the study resumed as the solid waste matter moved towards resolution and at this

City of Port St. Lucie  
Planning & Zoning Department  
121 SW Port St. Lucie Blvd., Bldg B  
Port St. Lucie, Florida 34984-5099  
772.871.5213  
www.cityofpsl.com



Bethany L. Grubbs  
Planner III  
772.344.4362  
[bgrubbs@cityofpsl.com](mailto:bgrubbs@cityofpsl.com)

time the analysis has been completed and the project is ready for consideration by the City Council.

- June 30th was the timeline that was utilized for scheduling purposes. City Council directed staff to table the first hearing of the impact fees ordinance to April 24th to provide additional comment/question opportunities. The City has met the statutory requirements for appropriate comments prescribed by the statute, in addition, has had an additional stakeholder meeting to receive additional input. At this time staff has prepared all the necessary ordinances and studies to present to City Council for their consideration and deliberation.

#### **Stakeholder Follow-Up Question #6**

##### **How much new growth is there?**

- There are 46,000 residential units alone that are entitled. We cannot stop that growth. The Southwest Annexation Area is only 30% built out, and we know additional development is coming in the northwest area of the City, as well as infill development and redevelopment.