

UNDERSTANDING RESIDENTIAL IMPACT FEES

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**Single Family Residences,
Townhomes, Apartments,
Condominiums &
Mobile Homes**



**Alachua County
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<http://growth.management.alachuacounty.us/building/impactfees.php>

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What are impact fees? Impact Fees are charges imposed upon new development as a condition of development approval to pay for a proportionate share of the cost of improvements to the County's infrastructure necessary to serve new growth and development.

What types of impact fees did the Board of County Commissioners adopt? The County Commission adopted three categories of impact fees; transportation, fire service, and parks.

When will the impact fees go into effect? The impact fees were adopted on September 28, 2004 and went into effect on March 28, 2005.

Who is required to pay the impact fees? All new development in the unincorporated area of the County where a building permit is applied for after March 28, 2005 is required to pay an impact fee.

When do I incur the obligation to pay an impact fee and when will I have to pay it? The obligation to pay an impact fee is incurred when a building permit is applied for. The impact fee is paid prior to issuance of the certificate of occupancy, with some exceptions.

Is the impact fee a one-time payment or is it recurring? Impact fees are one-time payments required of new development in the unincorporated area of the County.

Who will be responsible for administration of the development impact fees? The impact fee ordinances indicate that the County Manager will designate an Impact Fee Administrator to carry out the administration of the impact fee ordinances. The Impact Fee Administrator works in the Growth Management Department.

How will the money from impact fees be used? Impact fees can only be used for the purpose for which they were collected. For example, Fire Service impact fees can only be spent on capital improvements that expand the capacity of the County's Fire Services capabilities. Likewise, Transportation and Park impact fees can only be used to expand the capacities of the transportation system and park system, respectively. Impact fee revenue cannot be used for operating and maintenance expenses. Transportation impact fees can only be spent within the District they were collected in.

If my current building permit expires or I need an extension after March 28, 2005, am I subject to payment of an impact fee? Yes, the *renewal* or *extension* of a building permit after March 28, 2005 requires the payment of an impact fee.

If there is an increase in impact fees and my permit expires or I need to extend my current building permit, am I required to pay the increased fee? Yes, if the impact fee rate has increased since the time of initial permit application and a permit is renewed or extended, then the increased impact fee must be paid.

Are impact fees calculated based on the number of square feet under roof or heated and air conditioned? Impact fees for residential structures are calculated on the area of the building or structure provided or designed to be provided with heating or air.

Is there a cap on the amount of impact fees that are paid on residential properties? Yes, the impact ordinances establish caps at 2,600 square feet for purposes of calculating residential impact fees. In other words, any new residential building larger than 2,600 square feet

will pay no more than the fee associated with a 2,600 square foot residential building. The 2,600 square foot cap also applies to home expansions and replacement of existing structures.

If I am remodeling my home do I have to pay an impact fee? If a home is remodeled or rebuilt and the size of the building is not increased, a payment of impact fees is not required.

Is there an impact fee for an accessory structure such as a garage? No, if a shed, garage, barn, porch, or some other accessory structure is constructed and the structure is **not** designed for active living use, then an impact fee is not required.

I want to construct an addition to my home; do I have to pay an impact fee? If the heated and air conditioned space of a home is increased, then an impact fee payment is required, up to the 2,600 square foot cap. For example, if a 600 foot addition is added to a 2,300 square foot house (2,900 sq ft), then impact fees are only due for 300 square feet, not 600 square feet, due to the 2,600 square foot cap.

How are impact fees determined for secondary dwelling units? A secondary dwelling unit, whether it is a permanent structure or mobile home, is evaluated as a separate residential structure from the primary dwelling. For a secondary dwelling constructed over a garage, impact fees are only due for the square footage of the structure provided with heat and air.

Are impact fees due if I am replacing an existing home with a new home? No, if the new home is the same size or smaller than the existing home. If the legally existing mobile home or a permanent home is replaced with a

larger home, then impact fees are due for the net increase in square footage. For example, if a 1,000 square foot mobile home is replaced with an 1,800 square foot permanent home, then impact fees are only due for the net increase of 800 square feet.

What are the adopted impact fee rates and are they the same for all types of residential development? All residential development, regardless if the development is a single-family home, mobile home, or apartment, pays the same impact fee rate per square foot. Below are the per square foot rates for each impact fee:

IMPACT FEE RATES	
Category	Rate Per Sq. Ft.
Parks	\$.126
Fire	\$.076
Transportation	
Urban New	\$1.736
Urban Expansion	\$1.383
Traditional Neighborhood	\$1.067
Rural New	\$2.147
Rural Expansion	\$1.257

Example: 1,000 square foot house in the urban area would pay an impact fee of \$1,938 (\$126 - Park, \$76 - Fire, \$1,736 - Urban New)

How are the urban and rural categories determined? The Urban category is for residential developments within the Urban Cluster Area, as defined in the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan. Development outside the Urban Cluster Area is classified as Rural. Maps can be downloaded online or viewed using the GeoPT Mapper application online.

How is Expansion defined? Additions and the replacement of an existing home with a larger home both fall under the expansion category.

How are impact fees determined for single-family attached and multi-family developments? The impact fees are determined on a per unit basis. For example, a townhome development in the urban area with 20 units at 1,000 square foot each would pay \$38,760 (\$1,938 per unit) in impact fees.

Are there any programs available to help with paying impact fees? Yes, the **Impact Fee Assistance Program** provides funding for the cost of impact fees for income-eligible homebuyers. Funding will be provided as a 0% interest, soft second mortgage for a five year term. You will have to repay a portion of the loan only if you sell or rent the home or refinance within the first five years of owning the home. Applications are available at the Growth Management office downtown, can be downloaded online or can be ordered by calling (352) 264-7013.

How can I be assured that the impact fees I pay are being used for the expansion of capital facilities? The impact fees are deposited into separate special revenue funds to allow the tracking of associated revenue and expenditures. The impact fee funds are legally required to be audited on an annual basis by an independent auditor.

If the impact fees are not spent in a reasonable period of time will I receive a refund? The impact fee ordinances requires impact fee revenues be spent in the order that it is collected. If the impact fees are not spent or obligated within six (6) years of collection then they must be refunded to the entity that paid the fees.