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Impact Fee Credits for Livable Communities Improvements

Many local governments are stepping up efforts to develop multimodal transportation systems as a means to enhance the livability of their communities. One way to accomplish this may be through use of transportation impact fee credits. Impact fee credits may be used to incentive developers to construct some components of the intermodal system. In 2004, the Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization requested assistance from the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) in determining the appropriate value of non-highway improvements to the transportation system for the purpose of providing transportation impact fee credits for developments that advance the MPO's Livable Communities Initiative. This paper highlights the findings of that research. There is a benefit of providing multimodal facilities and of transit-oriented or traditional neighborhood development in advancing alternative modes of transportation. This benefit is not always easy to quantify, however, as it varies considerably based on a range of variables, such as the size of the developed area, the compatibility of the land use mix, the degree of connectivity in the built environment, location of the development, socioeconomic characteristics of the affected population, and the density or intensity of uses. Given such variation in existing study findings, most communities evaluated for this report did not have specific data to support their multimodal reductions or credits. Instead, observation, and the fact that research to date indicates a trend toward multimodal benefits, became the basis for discretionary decisions regarding percent reductions in impact fees or reductions in trip generation for various actions.

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Conference:

[Transportation Research Board 85th Annual Meeting \(/Results?q=&serial="Transportation%20Research%20Board%2085th%20Annual%20Meeting"\)](#).
Location: Washington DC, United States
Date: 2006-1-22 to 2006-1-26

Date: 2006

Language

English

Media Info

Media Type: CD-ROM

Features: References; Tables;

Pagination: 19p

Monograph Title: TRB 85th Annual Meeting Compendium of Papers CD-ROM

Subject/Index Terms

TRT Terms: [Benefits \(/Results?q=&datein=all&index="Benefits"\)](#); [Built environment \(/Results?q=&datein=all&index="Built%20environment"\)](#); [Impact fees \(/Results?q=&datein=all&index="Impact%20fees"\)](#); [Incentives \(/Results?q=&datein=all&index="Incentives"\)](#); [Intermodal transportation \(/Results?q=&datein=all&index="Intermodal%20transportation"\)](#); [Land use \(/Results?q=&datein=all&index="Land%20use"\)](#); [Livability \(/Results?q=&datein=all&index="Livability"\)](#); [Multimodal transportation \(/Results?q=&datein=all&index="Multimodal%20transportation"\)](#); [Population density \(/Results?](#)

[q=&datein=all&index="Population%20density";](#) [Quality of life \(/Results?q=&datein=all&index="Quality%20of%20life"\);](#) [Residential location \(/Results?q=&datein=all&index="Residential%20location"\);](#) [Socioeconomic factors \(/Results?q=&datein=all&index="Socioeconomic%20factors"\);](#) [Transit oriented development \(/Results?q=&datein=all&index="Transit%20oriented%20development"\);](#) [Transportation modes \(/Results?q=&datein=all&index="Transportation%20modes"\);](#) [Trip generation \(/Results?q=&datein=all&index="Trip%20generation"\)](#)
Uncontrolled Terms: [Impact fee credits \(/Results?q=&datein=all&index="Impact%20fee%20credits"\)](#)
Subject Areas: Economics; Finance; Highways; Public Transportation; Society; I10: Economics and Administration;

Filing Info

Accession Number: 01020086

Record Type: Publication

Report/Paper Numbers: 06-2935

Files: TRIS, TRB

Created Date: (/edit/777750)Mar 3 2006 11:10AM

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine

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