

## Impact Fee FAQs

### What are impact fees?

Impact fees are one-time charges levied by local governments on new developments to assist with funding the infrastructure required by new growth. The concept behind impact fees is that while development can bring many benefits, it also affects infrastructure needs.

New development adds people, which means more traffic to roadways and other transportation infrastructure as well as increasing the demand for parks and recreational facilities, libraries, law enforcement, fire and emergency management facilities, schools, and other public buildings. To accommodate this growth, additional capital investment is required.

Sarasota County has eight growth-related impact fees, including Educational System, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Fire, General Government, Justice Facilities, Law Enforcement, Mobility, and Parks.

### Why impact fees?

Impact fees are fundamentally about planning for smart and sustainable growth.

- To ensure that a new development pays its fair share of infrastructure costs, and there is adequate infrastructure capacity to allow for growth as envisioned.
- To create efficiency and prevent existing residents and businesses from having to pay the costs associated with new growth.
- To provide a funding source to help prevent reductions in levels of service due to new growth.
- The fees are established in a published fee schedule, meaning that they are:
  - **Predictable** – Developers know what they will pay when beginning a project.
  - **Equitable** – All new developments pay on a proportional basis according to the same schedule.
  - **Efficient** – Project impacts are assessed once at permitting and not subject to potentially prolonged negotiation and implementation.

### Who benefits from the impact fees collected?

Revenues accrued from impact fees must be spent on infrastructure improvements that directly benefit the development that pays the fee. Impact fees allow local governments to fund specific components of their infrastructure in an intentional fashion.

## **Who pays impact fees?**

Impact fees are assessed and due from anyone who builds a new residence, commercial building, or changes the use of a building.

## **How are impact fees calculated?**

Residential impact fees are assessed based on the under roof enclosed air-conditioned building square footage area per dwelling unit.

Most non-residential developments are assessed on the total square footage of the under-roof floor area.

Lodging developments are assessed based on a per room/space basis.

## **Why do I have to pay impact fees for an existing business?**

Changes from the declared business use at the time of impact fee payment to the present may result in additional impact fees.

## **When is the payment of impact fees due?**

The payment of the required impact fees are due prior to the issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy (CO) or Certificate of Completion (CoC).

The Fire and EMS fees are required to be paid prior to the issuance of the building permit.

## **Can I make a partial payment on the impact fees owed?**

Partial payments are not accepted.

## **How can I pay the impact fees?**

Impact fee payments can be made on-line, in-person, or by mail.

### ➤ **Online:**

To pay online through [Accela Citizen Access](#), you must be a registered user of Sarasota County Accela Citizen Access and must be listed as the applicant on the permit.

### ➤ **In-Person or by Mail:**

Payments can be made in-person or by mail to the locations shown below.

Checks should be made payable to Sarasota County Board of County Commissioners.

## **Impact Fee Administration**

870 Apex Road

Sarasota, FL 34240

[www.scgov.net/PDS](http://www.scgov.net/PDS)

- Sarasota Operations Center  
Attn: Building Department  
870 Apex Road  
Sarasota, FL 34240
- R.L. Anderson Administration Center  
Attn: Building Department  
4000 S. Tamiami Trail  
Venice, FL 34293

### **How can I request an impact fee assessment?**

Impact fee assessment requests can be submitted via email to [impactfees@scgov.net](mailto:impactfees@scgov.net).

### **When will new or increased fees go into effect?**

A notice imposing a new or increased impact fee will be provided at least 90 days before the effective date of an ordinance or resolution. The effective date will be specified in the adoption ordinance.

### **What process is required to adopt the impact fees?**

Florida Statutes Chapter 163.31801 provides requirements and procedures to be followed by a county, municipality, or special district when it adopts an impact fee.

These requirements include basing an impact fee's calculation on recent and localized data and detailed accounting and reporting of collections and expenditures.

### **Does the Board of County Commissioners have to adopt impact fees?**

The state legislature has granted the authority to enact impact fees to the Board of County Commissioners through the enactment of F.S. Ch. 125, F.S. §§ 163.3201, 163.3202, and 380.06(16).

### **Is the use of impact fee funds restricted?**

Yes, the use of impact fee funds is restricted to funding growth-related capital improvements for multimodal transportation, parks and natural resources, law enforcement, public safety, libraries, and may not be used for replacing infrastructure, maintenance, or operations.