

March 20, 2026

Mark Barnes, Finance Director  
Effingham County Board of Commissioners  
804 South Laurel Street  
Springfield, GA 31329

**RE: Proposal to Update Impact Fee Program**

Dear Mark,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the enclosed proposal to expand and update Effingham County's Impact Fee Program.

Hatley Plans LLC ("Hatley Plans") has extensive experience creating, updating and maintaining impact fee programs for cities and counties in Georgia, including the coastal region. We are currently working with Bulloch County to establish an impact fee program, and we maintain close working relationships with administrators of the impact fee programs for Savannah, Liberty County, and Camden County.

The enclosed proposal includes a thorough scope of work that details the required steps to develop and implement an impact fee program in accordance with the Georgia Development Impact Fee Act (DIFA) and the Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), Chapter 110-12-2, Development Impact Fee Compliance Requirements. Additional information includes a proposed schedule and project fee.

Thank you for your consideration, and please reach out if you would like to discuss the proposal or require additional information.

Sincerely,



Paige Hatley, President  
Hatley Plans LLC

cc: Tim Callanan, County Manager

## Scope of Services

Hatley Plans' services will include a complete update to the County's Impact Fee Program in accordance with applicable state guidelines and law. In the course of our studies, we will consider the creation and amount of impact fees for the following public facility categories:

- Parks, Recreation and Open Space
- Fire Protection Services
- Emergency Response Services (EMS, E911, EMA)
- Law Enforcement (Sheriff's Office / Jail)
- Animal Control
- Library Services
- Road and Bridge Improvements

Specific services include the following tasks:

### **Task 1: Impact Fee Study Initiation**

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#### **Task 1.1: Data Collection**

After an initial internal kick-off meeting with key County staff members to review the proposed project schedule and coordinate staff and consultant responsibilities, Hatley Plans will obtain copies of all relevant plans, studies, data and documents needed to perform the scope of work.

Information to be gathered includes, but is not limited to:

- Inventories of all existing community facilities pertinent to the impact fee study, including land, buildings, permanent facilities, and rolling stock or heavy equipment having a service life of at least ten years.
- Any recent study or calculations prepared for the County that contain population, employment, and/or housing forecasts.
- Any adopted plans that address the public facility categories (such as a Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Fire Station Coverage Plan, Comprehensive Transportation Plan, etc.) or other departmental service plans/projections.
- The number of employees from the Occupational Tax employment statistics by each business category for the current and past ten years, if available.
- Latest Capital Assets Listings – value and year built or acquired of each facility, vehicle or other capital item pertaining to the public facility categories listed above.
- List of SPLOST and TSPLOST program-funded projects and status of each.
- Debt payment schedules for outstanding bond issues or loans relating to the identified public facility categories.
- Budgeted capital projects and any adopted Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).
- A list of currently proposed new or expanded facilities for which funding has already been identified or programmed, and method of funding.
- A prioritized list of projects planned or envisioned by the County but not yet funded for each public facility category, including estimated costs and start dates.

**Task 1.2: Conduct Impact Fee Kick-Off Public Hearing**

An informational presentation and public hearing in accordance with Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) will be held at the outset of the project, with an emphasis on informing the public of the process to develop a new impact fee program and opportunities to provide input. Hatley Plans will prepare appropriate materials for the public hearing and will be present to answer any questions raised by the public or the Board of Commissioners.

**Task 1.3: Establish and Convene Impact Fee Advisory Committee**

Hatley Plans will advise County staff on the creation of an Impact Fee Advisory Committee in accordance with the requirements and restrictions imposed by the Georgia Impact Fee Act (DIFA). The committee will be appointed by Board of Commissioners and will have the responsibility of providing input on the fee schedule prior to adoption of an amended Development Impact Fee Ordinance (which will include the final fee schedule). An initial orientation meeting with the Committee will be held to detail its role, the study process, and state law provisions.

**Task 1 Deliverables:**

- Meeting with all affected departments regarding project overview, data needs, planned capital projects, status, etc. (this is proposed as a group meeting to occur after the initial internal “kick-off” with key County staff).
- Recommended template for the notice to be advertised for the kick-off public hearing.
- Attendance and a presentation of pertinent information (as required by DCA guidelines) at the kick-off public hearing before the Board of Commissioners.
- Meeting #1 with the Impact Fee Advisory Committee.

**Task 2: Capital Improvements Element (CIE)**

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**Task 2.1: Prepare Draft CIE**

Hatley Plans will prepare a draft Capital Improvements Element (CIE) that will include a complete list of impact fee eligible projects needed to serve future growth over the next 20 years, as well as a Five-Year Community Work Program (CWP) that highlights projects that are anticipated to be completed in the near-term, as required by DCA.

Project needs will be based on long-range population, employment, and housing forecasts, as well as Level of Service (LOS) standards for each of the public facility categories based on existing facilities and/or future plans.

The CIE will be prepared as a stand-alone document that can act as an appendix to the Comprehensive Plan. Upon approval by DCA and adoption by Board of Commissioners (see Task 4), the CIE will automatically amend the Plan.

**Task 2.2: Conduct CIE Transmittal Public Hearing**

Hatley Plans will facilitate a required public hearing before the Board of Commissioners to receive public input and for authorization to transmit the CIE to the Coastal Regional Commission (CRC) to initiate review by DCA as a future amendment to the County’s Comprehensive Plan.

### **Task 2.3: Impact Fee Advisory Committee Meeting #2**

While the CIE is under review, Hatley Plans will meet with the Advisory Committee to summarize the projects anticipated to be funded with impact fees (i.e., projects included in the CIE) and present preliminary information about potential fees to set the stage for the next committee meeting (see Task 3). This information will include impact fee programs in surrounding communities and a summary of key provisions from the Development Impact Fee Ordinance.

#### **Task 2 Deliverables:**

- Draft Capital Improvements Element in PDF format containing all data and information required by DCA.
- Recommended formats for the public hearing notice and the Transmittal Resolution for the required public hearing.
- Briefing PowerPoint summarizing the Capital Improvements Element (CIE) for Board of Commissioners presentation prior to the public hearing.
- Attendance at the required public hearing before the Board of Commissioners regarding transmittal of the draft CIE to the CRC and DCA.
- Review of comments from DCA on the CIE (if any) and appropriate responses and/or revisions.
- Meeting #2 with the Advisory Committee.

### **Task 3: Calculate and Establish Fees**

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#### **Task 3.1: Prepare Maximum Fee Calculations**

Hatley Plans will prepare a fee schedule with unit costs for a variety of land uses. Land uses will be based on those in the Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual (12<sup>th</sup> Edition), since ITE maintains data for a variety of uses that is utilized to generate per-unit fees. Land use categories to be addressed in the two-page fee schedule include residential, retail, service, office, medical, institutional, recreational, lodging, and industrial classifications.

Importantly, since Georgia law provides that new growth and development cannot be charged more than their fair proportionate share of the costs of the capital improvements needed to serve them, the fee schedule will reflect the *most* that could be charged as an impact fee to establish the “ceiling” above which the County cannot go.

Accordingly, maximum impact fees for each land use category in each public facility category will be calculated, and fees will be net of revenue credits against impact fees to avoid potential situations of “double taxation” by new growth, who will pay impact fees as well as other local revenue sources used to pay for capital projects.

The actual fees to be charged will be decided by the Board of Commissioners as part of the Development Impact Fee Ordinance task (see Task 4), which will include the final fee schedule. The fee schedule may reflect the maximum fees, or a reduced schedule based on deliberations to occur under Task 3.3.

### **Task 3.2 Impact Fee Advisory Committee Meeting #3**

Hatley Plans will present the maximum fee schedule to the Advisory Committee for discussion and input. To aid in the discussion, impact fees for certain uses that are charged by surrounding communities will be presented relative to the maximums that could be charged in the county. In addition, Hatley Plans will discuss ways fees can be reduced (via reduced fee schedule and/or on a project-by-project basis, as allowed under state law). Ultimately, the purpose of this final meeting will be to generate recommendations that will be forwarded to the Board of Commissioners, with emphasis on the following: whether to adopt maximum fee schedule or a reduced fee schedule, and whether to phase in adoption of the fees over a period of time.

### **Task 3.3 Board of Commissioners Work Session**

Hatley Plans will facilitate a work session with the Board of Commissioners to determine the final fee schedule and timeframe for implementation. The Advisory Committee's recommendation(s) will be shared, as well as the briefing materials used to guide prior discussions with the Committee. Based on this work session, a fee schedule will be prepared for inclusion in the draft Development Impact Fee Ordinance (see Task 4.2).

#### ***Task 3 Deliverables:***

- Maximum Impact Fee Schedule.
- Meeting #3 with Impact Fee Advisory Committee to discuss the potential fee schedule.
- Attendance at one Board of Commissioners workshop to set the final fee schedule.

## **Task 4: Adoption of the Impact Fee Program**

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### **Task 4.1 Impact Fee Ordinance**

Suggested text amendments to the 2011 Development Impact Fee Ordinance will be prepared for review by the County Attorney during the 60-day CRC/DCA review process on the CIE. The Ordinance will ultimately include the final fee schedule prior to adoption.

### **Task 4.2 Fee Schedule for Adoption**

After confirming the impact fees the Board of Commissioners wishes to charge under Task 3, Hatley Plans will prepare a final impact fee schedule to be included in the County's Development Impact Fee Ordinance.

### **Task 4.3 Ordinance and CIE Adoption**

Hatley Plans will attend the two state-mandated public hearings for adoption of the Development Impact Fee Ordinance and will be prepared to answer any questions that may arise. It is anticipated that CIE adoption will coincide with the second public hearing on the Ordinance.

#### ***Task 4 Deliverables:***

- Submittal of the suggested amendments to the 2011 Development Impact Fee Ordinance text in Word format, for review and comment by the County Attorney.
- Submittal of the final Development Impact Fee Ordinance text in Word format reflecting comments or changes recommended by the County Attorney, as well as an effective date for collections and – if applicable – any phasing in of the fees over a specified period of time.

- Recommended templates for the public notice language to be published for the two public hearings regarding adoption of the Ordinance.
- Attendance at the first public hearing of the Board of Commissioners regarding adoption of the Ordinance.
- Attendance at the second public hearing of the Board of Commissioners to adopt the Development Impact Fee Ordinance and Capital Improvements Element.
- Submittal of the as-adopted CIE in digital format for transmittal by the County staff to the CRC for their records.

## **Task 5: Implementation of the Impact Fee Program**

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Our services will include preparation of an Excel-based fee schedule for the County's use in modifying the current building permit software to assess and collect impact fees, as well as an Administrative Procedures Manual to assist with administration of the impact fee program.

Following completion of the manual, we will conduct one training session with staff that will be responsible for administering the impact fee program.

### ***Task 5 Deliverables: 1***

- Final fee schedule in an Excel spreadsheet for use by County staff.
- Procedures Manual for administrative processes. In addition, detailed calculations of the maximum impact fees will be included as an appendix, since they are often referenced in the manual (and may be needed as a resource in general).

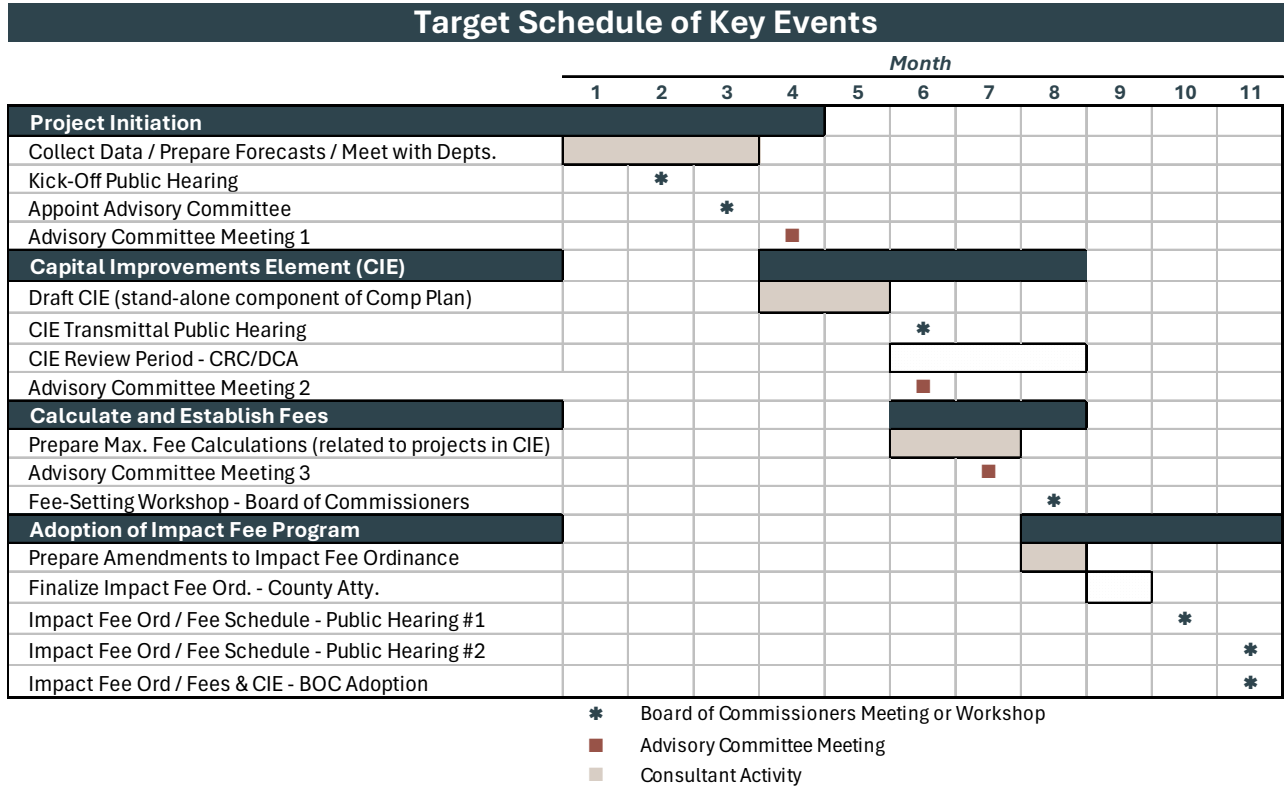
## **Task 6: Continuing Services**

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Following adoption and implementation of the updated Impact Fee Program, Hatley Plans will stand ready to answer questions, provide explanations and otherwise provide continuing advice to the County staff as questions or issues arise for a period of one year at no cost to the County. This assistance will be advisory in nature and delivered by telephone or email as appropriate to the inquiry.

## Proposed Schedule

The following schedule presents the sequence of tasks and timeframe required to fully update the impact fee program, considering necessary review periods and public hearing requirements mandated by the Georgia Development Impact Fee Act and DCA guidelines.



## Fee Proposal

The total lump sum fee, including all professional time and direct expenses, is proposed to not exceed: **\$85,760<sup>1</sup>**.

<sup>1</sup> This project fee can be reimbursed to the General Fund from the County's future impact fee collections under the Georgia Development Impact Fee Act.