



SENATOR TIM GRAYSON

SB 315

Ensuring Transparency and Fairness in Quimby Act Fees

Summary:

SB 315 promotes transparency and accountability in how Quimby Act fees are collected and used, by aligning the reporting requirements with the standards in the Mitigation Fee Act. The bill would also establish limits on the amount of park fees that can be assessed on certain types of development.

Background:

California has a massive and growing housing production and affordability problem, as the cost of building new housing has sharply risen. Multiple studies have shown that one of the major cost drivers of building new housing has been development fees, which can make up a significant portion of building costs, and are significantly higher in California compared to the rest of the nation.

The Terner Center for Housing Innovation at UC Berkeley has found that development fees can amount to anywhere from 6% to 18% of the median home price depending on location, and research suggests that these development fees are often passed along to homebuyers, putting homeownership further out of reach for many Californians¹. The universe of different development fees can include many different types of fees, including impact fees and fees paid for acquisition of parklands.

The Quimby Act allows local governments to require developers to dedicate land or pay in-lieu fees for parkland. These fees are intended to offset the impact of new housing developments on public land. The Mitigation Fee Act establishes transparency and reporting requirements for certain development fees, ensuring that funds are appropriately collected, allocated, and spent.

Currently, there is ambiguity as to whether Quimby fees are subject to the same reporting and transparency requirements as other mitigation fees. This can lead to inefficiencies or lack of accountability in how funds are used.

Problem:

Park fees in many California cities are prohibitively high, making it extremely difficult to build housing while keeping costs reasonable. Developers are often burdened with exorbitant fees that can amount to

millions of dollars, significantly raising the cost of new housing and ultimately affecting affordability for residents. Compounding this issue is the lack of standardized transparency in how these fees are calculated, collected, and allocated. Some jurisdictions have claimed that Quimby fees are not subject to the same reporting requirements as other impact fees, leaving Californians in the dark about how collected fees are spent and further complicating the already challenging housing development process.

Moreover, the current formula for calculating fees for parkland acquisition was developed at a time when the prevailing development model was sprawl subdivisions built in areas without existing parks infrastructure. That formula is poorly suited to higher density infill development, which makes more efficient use of existing infrastructure and which the state has sought to encourage in recent years.

Solution:

SB 315 enhances transparency in the Quimby Act fee collection and expenditures by requiring compliance with the reporting standards of the Mitigation Fee Act. Additionally, it updates the limitations on parkland acquisition fees for infill housing, capping them at 25% of a project's total acreage and fully waiving them for developments within ½ mile of an existing park.

This bill will help promote greater transparency, support development that is more balanced and equitable, and ultimately help to bring down the costs of new housing.

Support:

California YIMBY (Sponsor)
SPUR (Sponsor)

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¹ [It All Adds Up: The Cost of Housing Development Fees in Seven California Cities - Terner Center](#)