

Re: Written Testimony for **Agenda 7 A, Climate Fund Adoption**, Regular Session, November 14, 2022

To: Mayor Gamba, Council President Hyzy, and Councilors Batey, Nicodemus, Khosrobadi;  
Climate and Natural Resources Manager Natalie Rogers

**Three points in opposition to the climate fee ordinance.**

1. The ordinance states (Section E, page RS17 of Session Packet) that all fees be adjusted by the Consumer Price Index – Western Region.

In practice, this does not seem to be the case. I copy at the end of my testimony here the e-mail I receive from our Public Works Director, Peter Passarelli. Peter states that both the SAFE and SSMP fees are adjusted instead by the Seattle Construction Cost Index.

Using construction costs seems appropriate for SAFE and SSMP fees but it is at odds with the understanding conveyed to the public in the fees appearing on water and sewer bills.

2. **Could not storm water fees be increased in lieu** of parts of the funding purposes of this new climate fee?

I should think that the redefining of Storm Water Services to include *Natural based* projects, even if located on private property, would allow the Council to increase the storm water fee to cover these natural based, climate friendly storm water projects.

I know that the City of Portland allows for discounts on storm water costs to those private owners who maintain certain trees – in the name of storm water benefits.

I would be supportive of Council setting the storm water fee high enough to add natural based systems.

3. Climate fee **funded work beyond storm water** projects (including natural based improvements) **should be subject to voter approval**.

The climate fee ordinance creates a lack of transparency with the Public with its mixing of storm water natural based improvements and other climate activities, such as electric car charging and other electrification efforts.

### 3. (continued)

Moreover, generally the **Public prefers** new taxes and fees, as in the case of the climate fee, be enacted only with **voter approval**. This is demonstrated in that special local property tax levies and local gasoline tax increases require voter approval.

The water and sewer bill has come to represent a significant cost to Milwaukie property owners, and indirectly in many cases, for renters. It now approaches about a quarter to one-third of property tax bills and not too dissimilar in amount to that of gasoline costs.

It is most likely that the SSMP and SAFE fees will both increase sharply this next year to cover the costs of public construction and maintenance, and higher public borrowing costs. These elements are probably missed by the Public when it responds to the City's surveys if they are aware of the surveys at all.

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#### Copy of Peter's e-mail:

RE: Couple of questions related to SAFE and SSMP fees and internet resource

From: Peter Passarelli (passarellip@milwaukieoregon.gov)

To: eclarkmilwor@yahoo.com

Cc: OberA@milwaukieoregon.gov

Date: Wednesday, October 5, 2022 at 07:47 AM PDT

Hi Elvis,

Hope you are well. Sorry it took me a little bit long to get back to on your questions.

The SAFE and SSMP fees are adjusted by Council through a resolution when the Master Fee Schedule is adopted. The adjustments reflect the 5 year average of the Seattle Construction Cost Index, as of December 2021.

The city does have a lease with T-mobile to host their wireless infrastructure on the Elevated storage Tank. The city also uses the tower to host its 900 mhz radio communication system for our SCADA system (a system that allows us to remotely monitor and operate our water and wastewater systems). It could be a potential location for wireless broadband network infrastructure, but space is crowded and it could not interfere with our radio system or T-Mobile's infrastructure.

Hope that helps.

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Sincerely,  
Elvis Clark  
Ardenwald neighborhood  
Milwaukie 97222