

2007 Building and Development Fee Comparison

PARTICIPATING CITIES:

Ankeny	Altoona	Bondurant	Clive	Des Moines
Grimes	Indianola	Johnston	Norwalk	Pleasant Hill
Urbandale	Waukee	West Des Moines	Windsor Heights	

THE STUDY:

Fourteen cities were compared in all areas in which the municipality collected fees during a typical residential development and building process, beginning with the first plat approval and ending with the Certificate of Occupancy for the new homeowner.

BUILDING PERMIT FEE & BUILDER FEES:

Building permits were requested from each municipality for identical building plans for two average single family homes. The “Building Permit Fee” only compares the actual fee related to the valuation of the dwelling based on the square footage of the home.

The “Builder Fees” are other costs associated with construction that are charged to the builder when the building permit is applied for and received.

DEVELOPER COST:

Each municipality was asked to provide information regarding development fees as required to be paid by the developer prior to the actual home construction process. Due to many cities charging fees on a “per acre” basis, those fees were divided by four to represent a ¼ acre single family lot for comparison purposes in this study.

Several cities have separate “fee districts” that charge varying amounts of fees. For the purpose of this study, only a “High” and “Low” for those cities was included.

The numbers contained in the comparison should not be assumed to be an actual cost to develop and build a single family home on a ¼ acre lot. This study has attempted an “apples to apples” comparison of city fees throughout the metro area based on identical lot sizes and single family building plans. The costs associated with developing a community of single family homes is much greater than this study represents. Real costs also include mandatory land contributions to the city for parkland or “right of way”; the dedication to the city of roads within the development; required storm water retention basins; and may include special requests by the city for specific artistic street lights, playground equipment or other community amenities paid for by the developer.

Each municipality that provided information for this study was provided a preliminary copy of the comparison survey and was asked to verify and make changes to any fees that they found to be erroneous. Bondurant and Norwalk did not return information regarding development fees, so they have been left out of the “Overall” comparison.