



Sun File Photo By Kristen Early

The lot immediately adjacent to the Towne Crossing 8 movie theater has sold. It is the future site of an Aubrey's restaurant, pending tax increment financing.



Members of the Greene County Budget and Finance Committee who advanced a proposed 2017-18 county budget plan this week also moved a planned new Greenville restaurant one step nearer to reality.

The committee approved a tax increment financing plan and a site economic development plan for Aubrey's restaurant, which is seeking to locate beside the Towne Crossing 8 movie theater next spring.

The committee action passes the matter into the hands of the Greene County Commission for a vote. The TIF has already gained approval from the Industrial Development Board of Greenville and Greene County, and approval by the Greenville Board of Mayor and Aldermen is expected soon to follow.

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The TIF is a 10-year, \$200,000 plan that would allow developers to use money that would otherwise have gone to pay the increased property taxes on the development to fund projects of public interest at the location.

At the close of the 10 years, the property owners would begin to pay the full property taxes on the site, including those for the increased value due to the development.

Meanwhile, the plan projects that the restaurant development would bring in annual local sales tax revenues of nearly \$70,000 and support 70 indirect and direct jobs.

The total wage impact is projected at \$1.1 million annually. The plan projects the one-time project construction positive impact on Greene County's economy at \$2.5 million.

Assuming the county commission follows the budget committee's recommendation and Greeneville's governing body also approves the plan, the project will be in the clear to proceed.

In other action, the budget committee also gave an OK to a plan to create a second Greene County General Sessions Court. A private act by the Tennessee legislature was passed this year allowing the second sessions court, as has been requested by Sessions Judge Kenneth Bailey as a way to speed the flow of cases through the often overloaded court system.

Having a second judge to hear cases would allow Bailey time to deal with administrative and office matters outside the courtroom, he has told county officials.

The county commission will discuss funding the new judge position through the litigation tax, which County Attorney Roger Woolsey told the budget committee is multi-layered, with some litigation taxes restricted in how they can be used.

Woolsey told the committee he believes he has found a way to make the funding of a second sessions judge work through the litigation tax, meaning the position would not have to be funded using property tax or other county taxes that affect a broader base of citizens.

Woolsey is drafting a resolution to present to the commission this month.