



City to consider eliminating road impact fees

By AMANDA RICKER Chronicle Staff Writer

With a proposal to eliminate road impact fees still on the table from a previous meeting, the Bozeman City Commission will take up the issue again tonight.

Bozeman's road impact fee plan, charged on new construction, would nearly double the fees paid by a new business and nearly triple the amount paid on a new home.

The city was slated to adopt the new road impact fees Nov. 26, but Commission members Steve Kirchhoff and Kaaren Jacobson proposed abandoning the fees altogether.

Without cooperation from Gallatin County, increasing city road impact fees will encourage businesses to set up shop in outer-lying areas, increasing rural sprawl and the carbon footprint, according to city officials. The Gallatin County Commission in November approved road impact fee increases for new homes, but not new businesses.

Kirchhoff called eliminating the city's fees a reasonable option, considering the county's unwillingness to compromise.

County commissioners haven't budged on their impact fee plan, though several cities in the county in addition to Bozeman have voiced opposition to their decision.

Kirchhoff said he wonders if the county will get sued over its plan.

Jacobson said she will not again propose that the fees be eliminated. Improving the transportation system would literally come to a halt, she said.

"I don't think there are three (of five total) votes to eliminate them

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altogether," she said.

Mayor Jeff Krauss said he's pretty sure the commission will make a decision tor said he hopes road impact fees won't be eliminated, but if two other commissioner that way, he'll do the same.

If the city eliminates the road impact fees, the fee credits previously sold to deve would be rendered worthless and the city would be looking at lawsuits, Krauss s

The commission also could modify the fee amounts or decide to hire a third part study the proposal, Krauss said.

The city has already hired a consulting firm to determine a fair level to set the fe though some calculation mistakes were caught and corrected during the proces firm's study cost the city about \$190,000.

A community advisory board's position on the fees also is expected to be availa tonight's city commission meeting. The meeting will be 6 p.m. in the Community the Gallatin County Courthouse.



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