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## Ivins to cut water impact fees in half

City hopes to attract new business

By Kevin Jenkins  
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Ivins officials are hoping the culinary water master plan approved Thursday night will prove to be an incentive for new business as well as a boon for home builders.

The plan, including an impact fee analysis and strategy for impact fee-related facilities, is reviewed at least every five years to determine how water source, storage and use issues are changing. Ivins' last review followed a period of rapid population growth but changes in building patterns since then are resulting in a lowering of rates for new development.

Ivins' water impact fees, which are one of the fees charged to developers to fund infrastructure for new homes and businesses, will be cut almost in half for properties not using secondary water, Director of Finance Alan Rae said.

The fee will drop from \$2,098 to about \$1,086 per unit of volume measurement of the city's culinary water demand, he said.

"The rate is going down. That's always positive for the developers," City Manager Dale Coulam said.

"We're going through all our impact fees to see if we can make them more favorable for development," Rae said. "Particularly commercial development."

The City Council began its review of the water plan last month and held a public hearing Thursday night that drew little input from residents before the council approved it.

"I haven't received very inquiries (about it)," City Engineer Chuck Gillette said.

The ordinance will go into effect 90 days from the council's vote, Coulam said.

Rae said the biggest project is upsizing a water tank pumping station in the Taviawk area of Kayenta, which is expected to be completed this winter.

"We have been accumulating the money. We now have it in place," he said.

The city will review an agreement some residents north of 450 North entered when their homes were built that pays a separate fee toward the costs of the tank's construction. Although the agreement has long been called an impact fee, its purpose really is to repay a loan and part of the review will determine if the terms of the original loan have been satisfied, Coulam said.

The water impact fee is largely based on the city's projections for reaching "build-out" capacity where all of its developable lots are full.

In addition to a leveling off in the rate of development, many of the city's newer homes are second residences that affected projections about how many people would be living in any given household.

Gillette told the council during its Oct. 3 meeting that the city expects to reach build-out projections by 2046.

"We know our boundaries. ... I think our impact fees represent that," Rae said. "The city doesn't have the ability to expand like other cities do."

Ivins is bordered to the north by the Red Cliffs National Conservation Area, the Shivwits Band of Paiute Indians reservation to the west, St. George and Santa Clara to the east, and "a big gully" to the south, he said.

In other action Thursday, the city:

- Received an audit report issued by accounting firm Savage, Esplin and Radmall that commended the city for its reserves and good financial position.

- Approved a zoning amendment to allow chickens in residential areas based on lot size limits and a restriction on roosters.
  - Approved a city-wide standard for measuring walk-out basement allowances.
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