

Brevard County considers extending impact-fee freeze

Written by

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FLORIDA TODAY

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VIERA — Space Coast leaders may extend a transportation impact-fee freeze to try to "preserve and promote employment in the real estate development industry" during the lingering economic recession.

On March 5, 2009, the Brevard County Commission enacted a two-year moratorium on such fees, which are charged to builders to finance road projects.

As of January, \$13.7 million in transportation impact fees had been waived and refunded during this grace period, records show. That includes \$7.8 million generated by commercial construction and \$5.9 million from residential construction.

"The moratorium represents Brevard County doing all it can to help to stimulate an economic recovery," Assistant County Manager Mel Scott said.

"There are some that will see this as being not a sustainable course of action for the long-term, but worthy of implementation

for the short-term," Scott said.

Today, commissioners will consider extending the moratorium to four years, effective through 2013. The initiative debuted in 2009 as a two-year program, then commissioners added a third year last spring.

A supermajority of four out of five "yes" votes is required for passage.

The fee freeze affects commercial and residential construction in unincorporated areas, Cape Canaveral, Cocoa, Cocoa Beach, Grant-Valkaria, Indianalantic, Indian Harbour Beach, Malabar, Melbourne Beach, Melbourne Village, Palm Shores, Rockledge, Satellite Beach and West Melbourne.

To qualify, developers must receive a building permit by March 1, 2012, or a temporary certificate of occupancy by March 2013.

Despite the moratorium, the county

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building department only issued 572 permits last month -- the fourth consecutive January of dwindling construction demand, records show. The department issued 950 permits in January 2007, by comparison.

Permits issued last month totaled \$11 million in new construction value, compared with \$75 million in January 2006. That's an 85 percent plunge.

In neighboring Osceola County, commissioners enacted a one-year transportation impact fee moratorium last month for non-residential construction.

Contact Neale at 321-242-3638 or rneale@floridatoday.com.

If you go

The Brevard County Commission meets at 9 this morning in Building C of the Government Center, 2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way, Viera.

Noteworthy projects

These projects are in the Brevard County development permitting process:

Viera Hospital -- five-story, 263,075-square-foot hospital. Scheduled to open in April.

Viera Health Park medical plaza -- three-story, 76,416-square-foot medical office building. Nearing completion, first and third floors undergoing tenant build-out.

Stadium Corners at Viera -- 56,918-square-foot Publix and 12,600-square-foot retail building. Site plan approved, in permit plan review.

LKQ Auto Parts (Suntree) --62,713-square-foot office/warehouse building. Site plan

approved, in permit plan review.

Deuk Spine Institute (Baytree) -- two-story, 16,769-square-foot medical office building. Site plan approved, in permit plan review. -- **Brevard County Building Department**

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