



Road impact fees under discussion

County could assess levies of \$5,820 for homes not affected by cash proffers

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Government levies on residential construction in Chesterfield County are going up and getting spread around.

Last month, Chesterfield leaders established the highest cash proffers in the region to help pay for roads and schools on a per-lot basis.

Now, they are considering \$5,820 impact fees for homes unaffected by the proffers.

The plan to levy the fees on some 9,000 unbuilt homes in the county was left hanging last year by the previous Board of Supervisors.

The new board postponed action several times as it awaited the outcome of much-debated legislation brought forth at this year's General Assembly session. That legislation would have used the fees to replace proffers, expanding their ability to pay for infrastructure beyond transportation.

However, that bill, sponsored by Sen. John Watkins, R-Powhatan, was carried over at this year's session and will be reconsidered next year.

Now, impact fees are back on the table in Chesterfield as a tool to help make up ground on the county's \$1 billion-plus in unfunded road needs. The supervisors will consider them when they meet Wednesday.

"A road impact fee will do nothing but raise home prices and hurt the county," said Warren Wakeland, director of legislative affairs for the Home Building Association of Richmond.

Board Chairman A.S. "Art" Warren says he does not anticipate a vote on the matter, which will be considered in the afternoon without a public hearing.

"Because we just raised the cash proffers, my personal feeling is that it would be premature to look at impact fees right now as a new fee service," he said. "The bigger issue is the future of what the General Assembly may do with us, or to us."

The homes eligible for impact fees – those zoned before the county's adoption of its cash-proffer policy in 1991 – could generate more than \$50 million for the county in the long term if the fees are put into effect. Cash-proffer lots would not be affected.

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