

Council weighs sewer system development fee reduction

By **HOLLY DILLEMUTH H&N Staff Reporter** | Posted: Wednesday, April 9, 2014 12:00 am

Members of Klamath Falls City Council weighed the option Monday of significantly rolling back a city sewer development fee.

Public Works Director Mark Willrett presented the idea to reduce the sewer system development charge during a work session. The concept emerged through an effort to help boost conditions for development in the city, according to Willrett. Current rates for sewer SDC range from \$4,473 for multi-family residential to \$5,591 for commercial and single family residential/duplex developments.

No action was taken, but City Council members discussed the benefits.

Councilman Matt Dodson expressed interest in reducing the system development charge for the city's sewer customers, and offered insight on what it could mean for builders within Klamath Falls.

"We've got to do something to change the perception of the city, and if that's sacrificing four grand on a new house, that's really not that much," Dodson said. "If it does work, you're going to make it back in taxes."

City Manager Nathan Cherpeski said the concept of rolling back the charge was an idea to make the city more builder-friendly.

"How do we kind of put together a package that can spur some development?" Cherpeski said.

"I don't actually think we're going to get people swarming to Klamath Falls if we lower it (SDC)," Dodson said. "I think the only thing is, if we're cheaper than building in the county, that's a good PR (public relations) move."

Councilman Bud Hart commented it could boost morale among those who already develop within city limits.

"It's going to make the existing developers in town happier," Hart said.

Council members directed city staff to continue studying the option.

"We'll put together an ordinance probably for the first of May," Cherpeski said.

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