



Road fees worry big developers

By JOHN STANG /Daily inter Lake

Kalispell's proposed road impact fees could jeopardize the huge Glacier Town Center project, its developer said Tuesday.

"If they stay with the current rates, they may make a financial burden on the project to make it financially unfeasible," said Chad Wolford, a partner in Wolford Development Montana, which plans to build Glacier Town Center.

Ken Kalvig, the project's Kalispell attorney, said: "I can tell it will have a significant impact on the project to the tune of several million dollars."

Kalvig later estimated that the project could pay up to \$6 million in road impact fees during its 20-year construction period.

Wolford, Kalvig and others spoke at a Tuesday meeting of critics and potential critics of the Kalispell government's proposed road impact fees.

About 30 people attended. They included a half dozen legislators and legislative candidates, as well as builders, developers and business people.

An impact fee is a one-time charge on a new home or commercial building that is built or annexed within Kalispell. Its purpose is to help the city pay the extra capital costs of serving that structure.

An impact fee committee briefed the city council on March 31 on its recommended road impact fees. The council is scheduled to discuss those recommendations next Monday in a workshop session at which no votes are legally allowed.

Wolford encouraged the 30 to "reasonably and rationally" lobby the city council to change the current proposal.

"Let the [city] officials know that this is not acceptable. ... I don't oppose [impact fees] blanketly, but I want them realistic," Wolford told the crowd.

Phil Harris, developer of Hutton Ranch Plaza, also raised concerns about the fees.

For more on this story, see Thursday's Daily Inter Lake.