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### Suspending impact fees

Bill Youngman

As the impact fee committee report states, Highlands County has an over abundance of unoccupied residential dwellings. It only stands to reason that by suspending the impact fees on residential dwellings in an attempt to start another housing boom and further flood the market with unoccupied residential dwellings, this would reduce the value of all dwellings existing and new, and leave the bill for the future impact caused, to be paid by the present taxpayers of Highlands County, not the ones causing the impact. That would not be the way to stimulate the economy.

However, I truly believe if we really want to try to stimulate the economy in Highlands County by suspending impact fees, the way to do it is by suspending the commercial impact fees.

1. What Highlands County needs to do to fill those unoccupied dwellings are permanent jobs attracting people to Highlands County and put the unemployed residents of Highlands County back to work. The only way to get more permanent jobs is to encourage more commercial development. Suspending those impact fees would do just that.

2. I understand that what we are trying to accomplish is to stimulate the economy of Highlands County as quickly as possible. Allow contractors and developers to build impact fee free at a future date when they feel the economy has turned around would totally defeat the purpose of suspending impact fees. To stop this, construction must start within three months of the free impact fee permit being pulled, or the permit would be invalid.

3. The objective is to stimulate the economy of Highlands County, not some foreign country. I am sure the taxpayers and voters of Highlands County would demand that an affidavit be signed agreeing that unauthorized alien workers would not be used on the permitted construction. Violation would jeopardize the pulling of building permits in the future. I would agree to suspending impact fees for 12 months under these conditions; how about you? Let your commissioner know how you feel.

Bill Youngman

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