

Valley News Dispatch

New West Deer businesses to get tax break

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West Deer officials hope to bring in new business by waiving all road maintenance-related fees levied against new businesses this year.

Three joint transportation impact "trip" fees — averaging about \$350 per trip — are part of a joint agreement with Indiana Township to pay for road construction brought on by additional traffic from new businesses.

A "trip" is a unit of road usage. For example, if a developer wanted to open a gasoline station and have 20 customers in what is projected as its peak hour of operation, the developer would pay a one-time impact fee of \$22,800 to the township that would be placed in a fund.

The funds would be used to pay for transportation improvements caused by the development, such as a traffic signal or a turning lane.

The trip fees have been in existence for just five months.

West Deer Township Manager Daniel Mator said that the fees will be waived to draw new business into the township.

"It's an incentive for economic development," Mator said.

New businesses will still be required to pay a one-time recreation fee of \$1,000, he said.

The joint impact fees were established by West Deer and Indiana townships to identify undeveloped commercial areas and to help pay for repairs to heavily traveled commercial routes connecting the municipalities.

West Deer's township-maintained roads have been divided into three zones, according to the amount of commercial traffic that each receives. The fees correspond to traffic estimates established for all types of potential new businesses.

The township's most heavily-traveled commercial route, Route 910, is to incur the highest trip fee, \$375. Mator said that the two other, more rural, sections of township roads each carry an impact fee of \$336.

Mator said the township supervisors will revisit the impact fees later in the year to determine whether to waive them for 2012, too.

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