

# Daily Herald

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## Towns now together on fees

### Kaneland school district hopes funds can help pay for new growth

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Seven towns will sign on to the Kaneland School District's plans for the same developer impact fees Monday.

"It's not really a change in the concept, now we just have everybody on board," said Kaneland School Board president Lisa Wiet.

In the past, the district asked towns to assess impact fees to be used for building funds and "transition fees" to be used for operating funds.

Now those costs will be rolled into one "school impact payment." Each town will assess the same fees, which are based on home selling price, number of bedrooms and other factors.

It only applies to developments approved after the agreement is signed.

Representatives from Elburn, Virgil, Sugar Grove, Maple Park, Kaneville, Montgomery and Cortland are to sign the agreement at the Kaneland School Board's meeting Monday. Each governing body has already passed the agreement.

It is the result of about eight months of negotiations between the towns and school district, which didn't always go smoothly.

When Kaneland first proposed the transition fee idea several years ago, a few smaller towns insisted that Sugar Grove enact them first, because it had more growth.

That fee was based on the idea that the school district doesn't receive property taxes from new homes until more than a year after they're built.

Last year, Maple Park approved a subdivision with a \$1,000 transition fee per home, several thousand dollars less than what three other towns had done.

It made at least one other town bat around the idea of reducing theirs, underscoring the need for such an agreement for the school district.

"This should take away the worry about competition between villages, about home builders playing them off each other," Wiet said.

The agreement runs through 2010, with the fees phased in over that time.

For this year, it won't necessarily be a rise in fees, and they might go slightly down in some cases, Wiet said.

For the rest of this year, a one-bedroom multifamily unit would be assessed a fee of \$1,700. A three-bedroom, \$400,000 house would be assessed a fee of \$5,400.99.

The fees won't totally pay for new growth, but Wiet hopes they can decrease the size and frequency of future referendums.

The school board paid Northern Illinois University Center for Governmental Studies \$10,000 last year to calculate the fee tables.

"Our point is, they need to be standard," Wiet said. "If your home is built in Kaneland, whether it's in Elburn, Cortland or Montgomery, the impact on Kaneland is the same."

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