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City road fees back up for discussion

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Bakersfield is about three months away from adopting a new impact fee to pay for future freeways but the amount is still up in the air. The City Council will get an update on the issue at its meeting Wednesday.

Although City Manager Alan Tandy proposed the fee last summer, the city is just at the beginning of the fee-setting process, said Marian Shaw, an engineer in the city's Public Works department.

"We have a rough framework of what we expect to see as a (road) network," Shaw said. "We are hoping to have a number in about three months."

The current impact fee for roads is \$7,066 per home outside the downtown area. Estimates for the additional impact fee have ranged from \$2,500 per home to a doubling of the fee.

Developers have objected to putting the entire cost of the freeway system on new development and warned the impact fee could extend Bakersfield's construction slowdown.

In other action, the council will take up the long-delayed Ten Section development south of Panama Lane. The council was to take action Feb. 13 but waited after the Sierra Club submitted a 10-page letter.

The proposed 220-acre neighborhood of about 700 homes south of McAllister Ranch was postponed by the council last August after it drew opposition from the Kern Water Bank Authority, which operates a recharge zone on adjacent land.

New conditions on the project, including a buffer zone, 6-foot block wall and warnings to buyers about the mosquitoes, led city staff to recommend approval of the project.

Jon Parker, general manager of the Kern Water Bank Authority, has told the council that despite the mitigation measures, he's not comfortable with the development because of the prevalence of the mosquito-borne West Nile Virus.

The state Department of Fish and Game, which earlier opposed the project, now supports it because of the new conditions.

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