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City to consider new taxes and fees

Shopping cart problem will also be addressed

By KELLY DONOVAN/Staff Writer

BARSTOW -- The prospect of developing new taxes or fees in the city will be a topic at a special City Council meeting today.

The city staff is proposing that the city look at ways to increase revenue with the stated purpose of getting more money to deal with the impact of growth and development, like the need for new or improved infrastructure.

Possibilities include tax assessment districts, development impact fees, development taxes and cost-of-service fees.

No specific tax or fee would be approved at today's meeting. If the council members agree to pursue new taxes or fees, the city staff would then work on plans for implementing them.

Ultimately, a new tax or fee would have to come back to the City Council for approval at a public meeting. Additionally, many taxes require voter approval.

Also on the agenda for today's special meeting is the issue of abandoned shopping carts around town.

Council members will consider whether to tackle the shopping cart matter with a proposed amendment to the municipal code regulating shopping carts.

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Among the city's concerns with abandoned shopping carts is that city staff members must spend time retrieving them.

"The problem is people -- customers, non-customers -- taking them off the property of the businesses and leaving them strewn about the community, and then public works has to go out and round them all up and return them," city spokesman John Rader said. "So we're trying to come up with some solutions."

If approved, the amendment would require businesses with shopping carts to have strategies for keeping carts on their sites, and for recovering them if they are removed.

In some instances, business could also be required to have devices to make sure shopping carts don't leave their properties.

After talking about shopping carts and possible taxes or fees, council members are scheduled to have a closed meeting to discuss new hospital negotiations between the city and Community Health Systems.

The meeting will be today at 2 p.m. at City Hall, 220 E. Mountain View St.

Newberry gets \$400,000 for street paving

The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors approved \$400,000 last week to be spent on a paving project for Newberry Road between Fairview Road and Riverside Drive in Newberry Springs.

The \$400,000, approved at Tuesday's Board of Supervisors meeting, is coming from federal Community Development Block Grant money for

the county's First District.

The money will be on top of \$1.05 million in Measure I money that First District Supervisor Bill Postmus already secured for the project, according to a statement from his office.

Construction on the project is expected to start next year, according to the statement.

Air district gets award

The Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District received an award last week for its use of a photovoltaic solar power system and for providing information to the community about solar power.

The Inland Counties Chapter of the American Lung Association gave the district its Clean Air Award Wednesday.

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