

# Red Bluff Daily News

## Chamber, city to debate fees

By CHERYL BRINKLEY-DN Staff Writer

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RED BLUFF The first meeting of the Chamber/citizens group and the city takes place at 5:30 p.m. tonight at City Hall to discuss proposed development impact fees.

The citizens group admits that the city needs to raise fees to help with needed improvements, but disagrees with the proposed fee increase and many things on the city's needs list.

The citizens group is comprised of Bill Moule, Ron Clark, Ken Robison, Steve Judson, Charlie Wright, Rich Mehling, Tom Eubanks, Joe Dominick, Rod Short and Larry Lalaguna.

The proposed increases for commercial and industrial development impact fees were not approved on Oct. 12 when the council approved increases on single-family and multi-family units.

Area businessmen and the Red Bluff-Tehama County Chamber of Commerce oppose the high proposed increase for commercial and industrial development.

The transportation fee was identified as the focus of additional information in that it is the largest of the proposed fees, according to former city public works director Gary Antone.

"Renewing development impact fees have been in the works for a period of time," Antone said in November. Antone is now the public works director for Tehama County. "The fees are necessary and should have been spaced out. Previous city councils did not stay up on this."

During those years, there was not a big push with development, Antone added.

"If you don't continue to do increases, you wind up with a big jump. It is unfortunate that circumstances hit all at one time," Antone said, speaking of the development impact fees, water rates and user fees. "The studies and fees are necessary."

Antone said it has been a very challenging time to go into the background and history.

What are development impact fees and credits? How do developers earn credits?

Development impact fees assist a city with improvements to its infrastructure and to mitigate increased traffic caused by the new development.

A developer that has been required by the city to construct any facilities or improvements as a condition of approval of a development permit may request an in-lieu credit of fees if the developer includes certain improvements in the construction rather than the city paying for the improvements, according to Red Bluff City Manager Susan Price.

"In many cases, the developer can do the improvements for less than the city can because they don't have prevailing wages to pay," Price said.

"Upon request, an in-lieu credit of fees shall be granted for facilities or improvements that mitigate all or a portion of the need thereof that is attributable to and reasonably related to the given development," according to City Code 17.14 (A) (1).

Two of the improvements that may qualify for credits in lieu of paying the city impact fees are street widening and/or traffic lights to alleviate traffic and storm drains to help prevent flooding, according to Price.

Recent developers of The Home Depot received credit on water supply and distribution, wastewater collection, wastewater recycling and traffic circulation.

Improvements in connecting water and sewer lines received a total credit of \$18,589. The improvements were done by the developer, so that amount was deducted from total development fees. The Home Depot developer did pay the city \$5,714 in impact fees for water supply and distribution, according to Price.

The traffic circulation impact fee charged by the city for street improvements and a traffic light at The Home Depot would have been more than \$330,000, but the developer chose to do some of the work, so received credit for \$128,983, according to Price.

Another example of development impact fees and credits is the Walgreens Pharmacy on South Main Street at Luther Road.

The development impact fees for Walgreens totaled \$40,291. The fees were divided between water supply, wastewater, traffic, flood protection (storm drains), fire and police protection, parks and recreation and city administration. The Walgreens developer was credited for \$9,588, according to Price.

The Walgreens developer chose not to overlay one lane on Luther Road, so opted to pay the city the entire amount of \$61,000. The developer did install accessibility to Walgreens off South Main Street, constructed a bus turnout and bus shelter, according to Price.

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