Council caving in to big developers

By Frank Allen / Yucca Valley

Where is the math?

The town council approved a development impact fee study by an outside consultant firm for $43,000, and then quickly rejected recommended structure fees. Guess what, folks? Your town council gave you a goose egg for the $43,000 you blew. Could it be the blown money would have provided for another part-time sheriff deputy?

The town council stated the fees were too exorbitant and unfair to developers. Some builders at the council hearing stated such fees would cause them to avoid doing business in Yucca Valley. Good! As far as this citizen is concerned, let all construction come to a halt and let Yucca Valley remain as it is. However, the truth is, there is no way to stop progress.

It seems the town council has caved in to the big developers and let them cash in on big profits and leave town with the taxpayers footing the bill for required infrastructure costs, such as improved roadways, signal lights and other roadway controls, relocating utilities, the need for contracting for increased public safety personnel, assisting in the building of new schools, etc. Those are the fees the developers should be responsible for and not the taxpayers. The recommended fees would cover most of those costs. Those fees were recommended not just for the present, but for years down the road.

The cities in the Coachella Valley didn't blink an eye when they put in place increased mitigation impact fees because they knew big-time developers had discovered the area and would take large profits and leave town and the taxpayer holding the bag.

Now, Council is considering a 15-member blue ribbon committee composed mostly of developers to consider fees to be charged. Come on and give me a break. Developers could care less about the average citizens being stuck with costs. You might as well select some students from Yucca Valley High or Joshua Springs. I would trust their recommendation over greedy developers. What are these town council members smoking, anyways?