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Council votes to delay decision on impact fees

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The building industry won a temporary reprieve on paying substantial impact fee increases in Peoria.

The Peoria City Council on Tuesday voted 5-2 to table a vote on the fees until Nov. 15.

The most significant increase is to the transportation fee, which in some areas of the city would nearly quadruple. Staff has recommended a phase-in approach to the fees, which the city says are needed to recoup cost to build facilities for new development.

Peoria imposes a one-time impact fee for infrastructure, including libraries, police, fire and roads.

"Table the adoption of the fee ordinance until it's more thoroughly reviewed," said John Lutich, who represents Columbia Communities, which has projects in northern and central Peoria. "There is reason to doubt the foundation of the fees before you."

Lutich said a developer would have to pay a total of \$17,000 in impact fees, of which \$6,588 is for transportation, for each single-family home in northern Peoria, compared with \$13,000 elsewhere. Currently, the total impact fee for a single-family home in northern Peoria is \$12,942.

Rose Arck, who represents the building community, said the proposed increase puts the city at a disadvantage for commercial development.

Vice Mayor Pat Dennis voiced concerns that the high fees would hurt infill development in southern Peoria.

Councilwomen Cathy Carlat and Vicki Hunt said the hike would make the city less attractive to developers.

"I don't want to be the city with the highest impact fees," Hunt said. "I am not sure

we can be competitive with the impact fees we are asking."

Hunt made the motion for a delay so the council can study the issue further. Council members Bob Barrett and Joan Evans voted no.

Impact fees are expected to support roughly 30 percent of all project costs in the next 10 years, according to staff.

Because land and construction costs continue to increase, every two years the city reviews its impact fee levels, which are different for single-family homes and commercial development.

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