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## County increases impact fees for parks, police

By Suzy Valentine

Companies and individuals contemplating development in unincorporated Miami-Dade County must pay increased park and police impact fees as the result of two county commission decisions Tuesday.

Any addition that creates occupancy rather than simply being an expansion will attract rises of 60%, 80% and 100% in impact fees over three years.

School impact fees are assessed on the basis of square-footage.

The county's parks chief said she was satisfied with the approach. "It is an accepted way of looking at increased costs in the community," said Vivian Donnell Rodriguez, director of the county's department of parks and recreation. "I think it will be adequate. This is not the only thing that funds park acquisition and development, so this is one means that we use to do that and, in lieu of other methods, this is a good method."

The ordinance enacting an increase in police impact fees originally provided for one hike of 327% - too much, argued Commissioner Rebeca Sosa.

"Developers are going to pass this to homeowners," she said, "and for those homeowners who are trying to build a little room for grandma and grandpa, this is an incredible amount. It's a huge impact to the normal resident."

The county's top administrator suggested the commission bring the fee into line with the park impact fee.

"The key is to have the fee adjusted to where it belongs," said County Manager George Burgess. "What the board could do is set out increases of 60%, 80% and 100% over the course of three years, and then it's consistent with the adjustment you just approved for the park impact fee. That might be a good thing to do."

Commissioners took Mr. Burgess' advice, revising the ordinance before adopting it.

A revised first-year hike of 60% would provide the Miami-Dade Police Department with first-year fees of \$1.9 million - money to be assigned to infrastructure rather than manpower. Over three years, the rise would yield \$3.3 million.

"The investment," said Mr. Burgess, "must have some nexus to growth."

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