

This is a printer friendly version of an article from **coloradoan.com**
To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

[Back](#)

Article published Jul 3, 2006

County pitches fee boost

Development fee would help pay for regional roads

By KEVIN DUGGAN

KevinDuggan@coloradoan.com

The combination of inflation and increased traffic has Larimer County officials considering a boost in a development impact fee used to cover the cost of improving regional roads.

The county and Fort Collins have collected the fee since 1999 and put it into a pool of funds to increase the capacity of county roads that carry significant traffic between cities.

County officials are pitching other local cities on contributing to the fund.

"The thinking is that since development in the cities is having an impact on county roads, development should contribute to improving the roads and their capacity for handling traffic," said Marc Engemoen, Larimer County director of public works.

Roads earmarked for improvement include South Shields Street and South Taft Hill Road, which connect Fort Collins and Loveland, and County Road 32.

The regional road fee is charged in addition to regular transportation impact fees charged by Fort Collins and the county. Since 1999, the regional fund has collected about \$2.8 million.

The fund is being used to help pay for a \$2 million project the city is building on South Taft Hill Road between Horsetooth and Harmony roads.

Regional money also will go toward improving the intersection of Taft Hill and Trilby roads, as well as a major county project on Harmony Road at County Road 5, Engemoen said.

The fee is based on the amount of traffic generated by commercial and residential developments. On a single-family home, the fee is \$164. The county is considering raising the fee to \$258.

The increase would be phased in over several years because of its size, Commissioner Kathay Rennels said. An inflation factor would be calculated into the fee so future increases aren't as significant, she said.

Loveland City Manager Don Williams said the city declined to charge the regional road fee in the past but will look at the issue again.

The city already charges transportation impact fees on residential development that are higher than other local communities. If the regional fee were to be added, Loveland would charge about \$500 more on a single-family unit than Fort Collins, according to county estimates.

Williams said potentially more significant would be the regional fee's impact on development charges applied to commercial projects. Loveland already relies heavily on impact fees of commercial development to fund road improvements.

"From a competitive point of view, that could put us at a disadvantage," he said.

Smaller communities, such as Wellington, Windsor and Timnath, also will be approached about participating in the regional fund, Rennels said.

The fee could serve as an "instrument" for funding a regional transportation authority, or RTA, which local officials have talked about forming for several years, Rennels said.
