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Monday, February 20, 2006

American Fork considers transportation impact fee

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BARBARA CHRISTIANSEN - North County Staff

American Fork is considering charging a transportation impact fee on new homes and consultants suggest it should be huge.

Consultants hired by the city to figure out how much the impact fee should be are recommending the city charge \$4,856 to \$5,014.

Comparatively, Cedar Hills charges \$615 and Eagle Mountain requires \$1,988 to \$2,428, depending on the property.

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At a recent meeting City Council members said they will continue to study the issue. It was unclear how soon they would vote on the fee.

"We recognize this fee is high," said Jason Burningham of Lewis, Young, Robertson & Burningham, the firm the city commissioned to study the fees.

"The purpose is to assure new growth is paying their fair share -- no more, no less," Burningham told City Council members at a recent meeting.

He said the firm broke the city into two service areas, north and south, using the freeway as the dividing line.

The study takes into consideration the level of service that existing residents receive, then calculates the cost of maintaining that same level for future residents, he said.

The firm came up with the proposed fee amount by dividing by the number of expected additional households, he said. Following that formula, the city may charge no more than that by law, although it may impose lower fees, he said.

Howard Denney, director of public works for the city, said other cities with established road impact fees may not have kept up with expenses and are charging too little.

American Fork already charges impact fees for water, sewer, storm water and parks.

This story appeared in The Daily Herald on page D3.

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