

# Orland studying impact fee rates

Tuesday, Feb 26 2013, 6:46 pm

Orland Planner Scott Friend is busy meeting with city department heads to discuss their needs as he formulates an impact fee study.

Friend told the City Council last week he does not have concrete numbers to present on fees at this time.

He noted development impact fees are charged by cities and counties for infrastructure projects such as new water and sewer lines to increase capacity for new development.

However, they cannot be charged to cover maintenance of facilities, Friend said.

Impact fees normally are updated every 10 years, and while Orland has not done a complete revamp, the council has made cost of living adjustments each year to keep them current, he said.

Orland has eight categories where it collects impact fees: police, fire, library, parks and recreation, public works, a proposed community center and a community benefit fee for city arts projects and the art gallery.

The community benefit fee, however, is different from regular impact fees, Friend said.

Friend said he has spoken with Police Chief J.C. Tolle, Fire Chief Jeff Gomes and others to see what they believe they will need in the next decade.

Based on those ideas, he can project what equipment and buildings might be needed as Orland grows.

However, population projections require using a crystal ball, he said.

The economy slowed growth during 2008 and 2009, city officials said, and it does not have nearly the population anticipated years ago.

State and other projections have 3,000 to 10,000 new residents coming to Orland.

"Population projections back in 1995 said we would have a 25,000 population by now," Mayor Charles Gee said.

The actual population is about 7,300, according to the 2010 census.

The population increased by 2 to 4 percent in years past, Friend said, but that rate has gone up and down.

Councilman Dennis Hoffman suggested impact fees for police services may need to go higher while fees for other services could go down, such as parks and recreation because the new center is already built.

Finding the right numbers for levels of service is a struggle, Friend said.

A larger police force will require a bigger building along with more equipment, he said.

The council will need to decide whether it wants three officers for every 1,000 people in the city or if it should do with fewer, Friend added.

Owners of one proposed subdivision — El Paseo — are now looking at putting in orchards instead of homes which could mean 300 fewer homes for the city, Friend said.