



## Local

# IMPACT FEE REFUNDS COULD BE AS HIGH AS \$1,600

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**GEORGETOWN, S.C.** — Last week, Georgetown County leaders decided to lower the impact fees it has been charging for new construction.

Soon, the owner of a residence who has paid the fees should receive a reimbursement check from the county for an average amount of \$1,600.

Boyd Johnson, the director of planning for the county, said altogether 81 developers paid the impact fees.

Of those, 78 were for new residences.

Impact fees are charged to help pay for infrastructure that will be needed because of new development.

The fee charged to new residences helps pay for things such as law enforcement, roads, recreation and libraries.

Commercial impact fees help fund law enforcement and transportation needs.

### One year's collections

In the year since the fee was initiated, the county has collected \$26,000 from three commercial developments and more than \$455,500 from the building of new residences, a report on the impact fee indicates.

More than \$226,000 of the fees collected has been spent by the county, the report states.

Johnson said several calculations will have to be made to determine the amount of each rebate but, for the residential developers, it will be approximately \$1,600.

Using that figure, the payback will cost the county more than \$125,000.

So far, county council has given the reduction in the fees the first of three required readings.

Johnson said the reimbursement checks will not be sent out until the third and final reading takes place in September.

"The check will go to the homeowner," Johnson said.

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### Some building hasn't occurred

County Administrator Sel Hemingway said the impact fees need to be lowered because some projects connected to fees have not taken place.

Another reason the fees are being lowered is because it has been determined Waccamaw Neck residents use services in other parts of the county quite often and people living in the western parts of the county use the services on the Neck quite often.

There has been a different fee for the Waccamaw Neck but now the fee will be the same county-wide.

The new fee is \$4,078 for a permit to build a home, according to Council.

A commercial structure of 3,000 square feet, for example, would require an impact fee of \$5,400, rather than \$9,400.

Johnson said he the lower fees are not a temporary measure. He said he expects them to remain in place.

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