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## Park district granted \$495 developer fee hike

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OROVILLE - Thanks to a decision by the Butte County Board of Supervisors, the Chico Area Recreation and Park District will be boosting fees on new development.

In a unanimous vote, the supervisors approved a \$495 addition to CARD park fees. The approved hike will take the impact fee on a new single-family home to \$2,375 per new unit constructed.

The approved hike is 40 percent less than CARD originally hoped to tack onto the fee that is used to purchase new parkland and facilities.

A quirk in the state law requires CARD's elected board of directors to get supervisors' approval to set impact fees.

In September the supervisors were asked to impose an \$826 hike to the existing \$1,880 fee.

The amount of the originally proposed hike was based on a review of the increase in housing prices in the Chico area.

Shari McCracken, county deputy chief administrator, told the board in September the median price of new homes being built in the unincorporated areas around the city of Chico had gone from \$243,000 to \$390,750 between 2003 and 2004, a hike of about 61 percent.

On Tuesday, Steve Visconti, interim CARD general manager, told the supervisors his board had decided to reduce the district's request.

However, he pointed out the city of Chico raised its park fees almost exactly to what CARD had originally requested.

"Their calculations and our calculations have proven each other," said Visconti.

On Sept. 15, when the CARD directors voted to scale back their hike request for this year, they also voted to ask the supervisors to approve another \$331 hike for the next year.

The second hike would bring the total to the \$826 increase the directors had originally sought.

On Tuesday, McCracken told the supervisors they were prohibited by law from imposing a hike for anything but the current year.

On a motion by Chico Supervisor Mary Anne Houx, the board unanimously approved the \$495 hike.

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