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Plan would defer commercial impact fee payments

By [MICHAEL D. BATES](#) | Hernando Today

County commissioners on Tuesday will consider a plan that would allow commercial and industrial builders to defer payment of impact fees that total in excess of \$25,000 for up to three years.

County officials hope this will act as an incentive to spur new development.

In August, the business and economic development committee discussed the possibility of offering an impact fee payment plan for large commercial and industrial projects, similar to a plan used by Highlands County, which is for non-residential only.

County staffers met and discussed several options. A threshold of \$200,000 to \$250,000 was originally proposed for commercial projects with a lower threshold for industrial projects.

But the committee wanted the board to consider lowering the threshold in order to provide an incentive for smaller commercial projects. The committee was also concerned about a consideration to record a lien or second mortgage as a safeguard against default, and suggested a bonding option.

The county attorney's office has prepared a draft ordinance with a \$25,000 threshold for both commercial and industrial projects.

The drafted ordinance would allow developers to defer the payment of impact fees up to three years with a nominal interest rate.

Payment of the total impact fee plus interest would be due in full at the end of the deferral period but no longer than three years.

The developer would be required to submit a performance bond or letter of credit in the amount equal to all impact fees owed plus interest at the time the building permit is issued.

County records show that 54 commercial-industrial projects would have been eligible for the fee deferment during the last two years.