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Proposed park impact fees a significant jump

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CHICO — In their second visit to the Chico Area Recreation and Park District board, an array of park impact fee increases were reduced, but in the case of fees on new single-family dwellings, they are more than double the current amounts.

After hearing comments from the board in February that the recommended fees were too high, a consultant brought back a new set on Thursday.

CARD General Manager Steve Visconti and consultant Blair Aas of SCI Consulting of Fairfield said the second draft of the nexus study fees reflected board-supported changes.

City and county park impact fees are passed along to CARD to provide parks and recreation services.

Aas said he dropped proposed park impact fees for nonresidential structures as the board directed, although other communities have adopted them.

Cost estimates on proposed facilities have been refined, he said. There also was a change in the size of park impact fees.

In the new draft, park impact fees levied on new single-family dwellings in Chico and the Butte County portions of the district respectively would go from \$2,913 and \$2,375 to \$5,885.

That represents a 102 percent and 148 percent increase respectively.

Aas had originally recommended a city and county fee of \$6,281.

The park impact fee on new multi-family dwellings was proposed at \$4,753, rather than \$5,073 suggested in the first draft.

The mobile home development fee was dropped to \$4,753, from \$5,073.

And building an additional residential unit — what's often called a granny unit — was suggested at a fee of \$2,263 rather than \$2,416 in the first draft.

CARD will have to ask both the city and county to approve new park impact fees, and even then, either government could readjust the amounts.

Even with the reductions, the CARD board had concerns, given the economy.

Aas said the district could phase in the fees over time, starting with a lower amount and raising them later.

"This fee program works to accomplish the (master) plan that you've put together," Aas said.

Chairman Fred Brooks noted citizens want to live in places where "quality recreation is," and it takes money to get there.

The board will review the second draft at its June meeting. There will be a public hearing on the fees in June.

The city and county will hold their own hearings on changing the park impact fees.

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BACKGROUND: Park impact fees charged on new residential construction help fund the Chico Area Recreation and Park District.

WHAT'S NEW: In order to meet the goals of CARD's master plan for recreation, those impact fees need to be increased, says CARD.

WHAT'S NEXT: The CARD board is still talking about the fees.

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