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Road impact fee moves forward

JOSH JOHNSON

JOSH JOHNSON, jjohnson@lahontanvalleynews.com

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A proposed \$2,300 impact fee on new primary construction in the county to fund road improvements moved forward following a review by county planners Wednesday.

The Churchill County Planning Commission unanimously recommended the measure to the Churchill County Commission, which will review the fee Wednesday at 3 p.m. If approved, the fee would likely take effect in early January, Planning Director Eleanor Lockwood said.

The fee would be assessed during the building permit phase and would apply to all new single-family, multifamily and business structures. It includes new mobile homes placed on a permanent foundation. The fee would not apply to the replacement or remodeling of a structure on an existing lot.

Funds from the fee would be used to assist county road construction identified in a capital improvement plan to accommodate residential growth north and west of the city of Fallon, which includes nearly 4,000 planned homes in several projects.

"We've gone to great lengths to incorporate standards that are in the interest of public health and safety," Lockwood said.

Proposed ideas in the plan include:

- The extension of Wade Lane to the west to connect with Soda Lake Road at a proposed cost of \$7.5 million.
- A connection of Moody Lane to Gummow Drive at an estimated cost of \$10.1 million.
- An extension of Moody Lane to the south to connect with Allen Road at an estimated cost of \$8.3 million. This project appears unlikely at this point because of the challenge of crossing the Carson River, a canal and Union Pacific rail lines, Lockwood said.

Components of the plan are tentative at this point and could change in the future, she said.

County resident Del Luft said he supported a road impact fee, but would like to see it based on the value of a structure instead of a flat fee.

After talking with legal counsel, county officials determined the fee would have to be assessed equally for each structure, Lockwood said.

Entities like the Wal-Mart Supercenter and larger residential developers also contribute to traffic improvements

and other infrastructure needs which homeowners do not, she said.

The fee will be reviewed annually and could be changed, Commissioner Stuart Richardson said.

"The consensus was \$2,300 was approximately what we need to cover the cost of new development," he said.

A conceptual map of the Collins Creek planned unit development was also presented.

The planned 29-home planned project on 13.25 acres between Alcorn and Bottom Roads drew criticism from surrounding residents who shared concern over traffic, property values and impact to wildlife.

Bottom Road resident Peter Young said Collins Creek would force out the wildlife which inhabits the area.

"This development will completely change the character of the neighborhood," he said.

Commissioner Ron Simms said the development is preferable to half-acre lots and individual wells and septic tanks.

"I think they came up with a very commendable plan for using the property in this nature," he said.

Traffic on Alcorn Road could become a problem with the added homes, Commissioner Richardson said.

"I want to see what they can do to mitigate the traffic," he said.

No vote is taken on a conceptual map, and developers use feedback from public hearings to assist with development of tentative maps.

Josh Johnson can be contacted at jjohnson@lahontanvalleynews.com

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