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Sierra Vista City Council might vote on development fees Thursday night

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SIERRA VISTA — The City Council on Thursday will consider an ordinance that would implement development-impact fees to pay for public infrastructure accommodating Sierra Vista's growth.

City staff recommended the ordinance.

This council vote is the next step in a nearly yearlong process of a city consultation and public debate regarding how best to administer the one-time fees fixed upon new business and housing developments. The fees would likely be passed on from the builders to the buyers.

After the Southeastern Arizona Contractors Association and Southern Arizona Home Builders Association criticized the original fee schedule estimation from the private consultant hired by the city, City Hall responded with an adjusted fee schedule after consideration of the contractors' critique.

That adjusted schedule is what appears on the ordinance to be considered Thursday. It shows a reduction of about 5 percent in fees amount for non-residential developments.

Another adjustment made by the city after considering the contractors' analysis was a \$442 decrease, to \$5,782, in the fee recommended for a single-family house.

If approved by the council vote, the ordinance will become a matter of public record for 30 days before another vote to approve that it becomes city code.

Also Thursday, an agenda item tabled at the last regular council meeting regarding a proposed residential design from developer Castle and Cooke could be removed from the table, said Michael Cerepanya, the company's director of land development.

After the item was tabled in November, Castle and Cooke was asked to create a plan to adequately address drainage issues in the residential development, called Chaparral Village North.

The 22-acre neighborhood design was approved before stricter drainage infrastructure city code became the current rule. However, Cerepanya said Castle and Cooke organized the hydrology information accumulated by the company's engineers, who have been in communication this week with city staff engineers to show the drainage infrastructure will accommodate the proposed development regardless.

During the awards and presentations at the beginning of the regular council meeting, employees for the city fire department will be recognized for the annual city firefighter awards.

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