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OUR VIEW: Waiving or delaying impact fees is no solution

Bakersfield City Councilmen Ken Weir and David Couch are pushing to eliminate or sharply reduce the transportation impact fee that new homebuilders must pay the city. In their eyes, lowering the \$12,870 fee will miraculously jump-start the sale of new homes and bring back construction jobs.

City staff, the city manager and the city attorney have all explained why tinkering with the fee is a bad idea. They repeated the explanations Friday when Weir and Couch brought up the proposals again. The fee helps fund roadwork like the Westside Parkway and Rosedale Highway widening. Messing with it could hurt the city's ability to fund those projects. The fee amount was based on rigorous research that justifies the figure and specifies how the money is used. Suddenly changing the fee opens the city to potential litigation. Those are not risks we should take.

Now that they've gotten a remedial lesson in the importance of the fee, we hope Weir and Couch will look for other ideas to revive new home sales.

