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Clay County to consider suspending road impact fee

BY BETH REESE CRAVEY | STORY UPDATED AT 5:16 AM ON WEDNESDAY, FEB. 25, 2009

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The Clay County Commission will on March 10 consider suspending the county's transportation impact fee for six months, in a bid to help the county's struggling housing and construction industries.

At their Tuesday meeting, commissioners heard from homebuilders and people in other construction trades, who spoke of drastic cutbacks in business and employee numbers. The discussion of suspending the local fees stemmed from a bill proposed in the Florida senate for a 3-year atatewide moratorium on the collection of impact fees.

Several commissioners wanted to immediately vote on the issue Tuesday, which was not on the meeting agenda. But other commissioners said they preferred to take action at the next meeting, to allow sufficient public notice.

County attorneys said an ordinance will be necessary, as well as review by the Planning Commission and public hearings. As a result, the suspension, if approved, may not take effect for 90 days or so.

The commission approved the Clay road fee in February 2008 to help fund more than \$450 million in transportation improvements needed by 2020. Due to subsequent litigation, collections did begin until January 2009. The fees are imposed on all new construction.

Single-family residential fees range from \$4,341 in the southwest part of Clay County to \$5,814 in the northeast. Fees vary widely for different non-residential projects, including industrial, warehouse and retail construction.

County Manager Fritz Behring said more than \$5 million in collections was budgeted for the current fiscal year, but actual revenues will be "nowher near that" because of minimal building permits being filed.

The commission action will not affect the educational impact fee assessed by the Clay County school district on new residential construction.

For more, go to My Clay Sun's Saturday, Feb. 28, edition.

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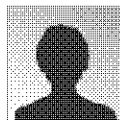
Submitted by kgeechee on Tue. 2/24/2009 at 6:25 pm

Of course, kill the hard won and needed impact fees by rushing a vote right now before the public has a chance to think about it. That's the way we do the business of government in Florida. The industry 'guys' always talk a big game, "never had no welfare in my family." Oh, yeah, who pays for all the roads, water & sewer lines, and schools needed to serve all those houses and business parks that are built.

I'll bet there are plenty of permitted & not built houses, etc., that y'all do not want to talk about, hanging around since Jeb & George W. left town. Why are these houses not built to aid the struggling industry if just building them is all you need? The truth is that you must be able to sell the unneeded houses, etc. before anyone can get paid.

Never mind; the truth is not something a Florida Republican would ever recognize.

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road impact fees

Submitted by crackerjax on Tue. 2/24/2009 at 7:28 pm

Waive road impact fees for developers? Developers, aka the National Association of Home Builders, should get in line with banks, insurance companies and Detroit carmakers for government subsidies, which fall on the back of taxpayers. Waiver of road impact fees in Clay County is another ploy by the development industry for more taxpayer subsidies. If new development doesn't pay its own way, then taxpayers pick up THEIR bill. That's a subsidy. Property taxes are already high enough without increasing them to benefit the homebuilding industry and all the costs they've dumped on taxpayers over the decades for more roads and public services. County commissioners who support this waiver are voting to raise the taxes of property owners. Connect the dots, voters.

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impact fees

Submitted by smokin on Tue. 2/24/2009 at 8:59 pm

It's wrong for the county to charge impact fees on the individuals who have owned land in Clay County and PAID TAXES on THEIR VACANT PROPERTY for years and have been trying to save their money so they could build their own home before the impact fees were voted in only to be hit with \$10,000 + in impact fees before they drive the first nail. The impact fee should be for any development having three or more homes in it and not for the individual who was already paying taxes on the property before the impact fees were voted in even if there wasn't a home on it yet.

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