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Commission Approves New Mobility Fees for Transportation

Commissioners hope the lower fees for new construction will entice development and lead to more jobs.

By [Neil Johnson](#) | [Email the author](#) | July 13, 2011

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Pasco County commissioners on Tuesday lowered the price developers will pay for new roads as a way to new jobs.

The unanimous vote put in place a new set of levies called mobility fees to replace transportation impact fe

The impact fees were charged to new construction as a way to make growth pay for new roads caused by it. Like the transportation impact fees, the mobility fees are charged for construction ranging from housing to retail. The new mobility fees vary for different parts of the county, though most are lower than the old transportation impact fees. Commissioners hope the lower fees, reduced to zero for office and light industrial construction in developed areas, will create more companies and jobs to Pasco.

"We're actually doing something that's going to create jobs in this county," said Commissioner Jack Marian. Waiving fees in urban areas for some uses amounts to a tax decrease, he said.

The new fees also are intended to direct growth to places where municipal services such as police, schools, fire or water are less expensive to place or cost less to provide, said County Administrator John Gallagher.

Fees for new development, including houses and retail, are lower in parts of the county designated as urban areas, which are mainly along the U.S. 19 corridor and in southern Pasco.

"It costs local government a lot less to provide services in an urban area than in a rural area," Gallagher said. The idea of directing growth brought objections from some people at Tuesday's meeting who said that was "You're trying to force people into living in a specific area," said Dave Miller of Seven Springs.

He and others said commissioners should postpone a decision.

But business interests wanted the commission to act.

"We need to get a decision one way or the other," said John Hagen, president of the Pasco Economic Development Council. Miller said commissioners should simply reduce the existing transportation impact fee instead of creating a new one. But the mobility fee also lets the county spend some of the money on pedestrian and bicycle paths and a streetcar. Commissioners were clear it would not go to light rail.

Transportation impact fees could only be spent on roads.

"Mobility fees give the county flexibility," Gallagher said.

The fees will not generate as much money as the impact fees they replaced and the ordinance commission will lose revenue, part of a penny sales tax levy and a third of any increase in property tax revenue to make up the cost. The gas tax money and sales tax revenue already are going to roads, said David Goldstein, chief assistant administrator. The ordinance anticipates property values will rise slightly, increasing the county's revenue. A third of any increase would go to roads.

Also, some of the fee money will pay for improvements along U.S. 19, Interstate 75, the Suncoast Parkway and the Suncoast Expressway, Goldstein said.

The fee commissioners adopted calls for replacing the transportation impact fee of \$10,302 levied uniformly on all single family homes.

Homes in urban areas such as New Port Richey would pay \$5,835 while rural areas, mostly north central Pasco and suburban areas, including Land O' Lakes, would pay \$8,650.

Cities can adopt the county's new mobility fees or stick with the current fee framework.

In making the motion to adopt the fee ordinance, Mariano said Pasco will be one of the first counties in Flori
"This is about something that started with job creation," he said. "We're going to be the leader."

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This is awful - this is a direct assault on our freedoms to live where we wish. What kind of job growth is g
NUTS these commissioners are !

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