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## Surprise City Council reaffirms charging developers impact fee

by **Cecilia Chan** - Feb. 26, 2009 10:37 AM  
The Arizona Republic

A majority of Surprise elected officials recently reaffirmed their stance that growth should pay for itself.

The dismal economy raised a question at the City Council retreat last week: Should the city change its policy of imposing a one-time development impact fee to pay for public infrastructure?

"We are saying to developers that we are not looking at any new business coming into Surprise," said Councilman Richard Alton, who requested that the item be placed on the retreat agenda. "They are hurting just as much as we are."

Alton said a developer purchased land for \$1.2 million with plans for a ministorage and gas station project but was unaware of the city's development impact fees that went into effect in 2007.

"He is ready to go but he is looking at \$120,000 in impact fees," Alton said. "He's got other properties as well. This is a problem."

City Manager Randy Oliver said a repeal of the fees carries legal ramifications because the city would need to refund developers who paid the fees or reimburse developers who built infrastructure.

"I don't feel new development should be a burden on current residents," said Councilman Joe Johnson. "New development should pay for itself."

Mayor Lyn Truitt also questioned whether the city really wanted current residents to pay for services or infrastructure created by new development.

The final consensus was to keep impact fees.

