

Impact fee in for bumpy ride

THE RECORD-COURIER EDITORIAL BOARD,

Douglas County has long had trouble with its roads. One of the first reader-written diatribes in the old Carson Valley News decried the expense of building a bridge over the Carson River to serve the center of the Valley.

Near the beginning of the 20th century, the capital's newspaper pointed out that despite the county's wealth, its roads were abominable.

"It has ... undisputed claims to having the poorest roads which lie outdoors," the Carson City News opined.

Attempts have been made by county leaders to raise taxes to provide for road maintenance and new routes, but the county's taxpayers have been reluctant to approve them.

Next week a new proposal comes forward to try and pay for new roads to help improve Douglas County's traffic patterns.

The plan to include an impact fee in the price of a building permit could help. It's a good idea to consider the issue while growth is slow.

But that's the same reason it will be hard to make much of a dent in the road budget.

Using estimates from the county, just completing Muller Parkway would require about 1,000 building permits. That's about a fifth of the county's inventory of buildable lots today.

In the old days that would be two year's growth, but now it's more like 20 years' growth.

We doubt increasing the building permit fee during these difficult times will get a very warm reception. But we also know that at least something will be required to build the roads county residents will require in the future.

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