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## Lady Lake eyes library fee

### Town officials want to create funding source

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LADY LAKE

Town officials could take a page out of Mount Dora's book.

Lake County commissioners last week awarded Mount Dora \$250,000 from county library-impact fees even though new homes built in the city don't contribute to the fund.

Officials in Lady Lake, which has been charging the county fee for library improvements necessitated by growth, don't think that's fair even though the town received \$500,000 toward a \$5 million to \$7 million library-expansion project during the latest round of allocations.

Since 2004, town officials figured the \$150,000 they had collected in county library-impact fees were dues they paid to be able to tap into that pot of money.

"We were not aware that you didn't have to contribute to pursue those funds," Town Manager Bill Vance said. "So we're going to investigate creating the town's own library-impact fee."

Mount Dora has its own library-impact fee and also gets money from county fees. In light of Mount Dora's success this year, Vance said, Lady Lake might stop charging the county fee and impose a town fee instead. If county funds are available, Vance said, the town, like Mount Dora, might apply for some of the cash.

The town would invest in a study to determine the price of a new fee, he said.

According to a county policy approved in March 2005, applications for library-fund grants are ranked by 10 criteria and awarded up to 30 points. If an applicant contributes to the fund, it earns five points. If it collects and retains its own impact fees locally, it loses five.

But most of the grant decision is based on two factors: how a project would benefit a library and how it would benefit countywide library services.

That's where Mount Dora had an advantage. The W.T. Bland Public Library serves enough residents outside of Mount Dora that county officials viewed it as a service to its city and outlying areas of the county as well.

"Their facility serves a great number of residents from unincorporated areas," Lake County Manager Cindy Hall said.



"It's looked at for the county as a whole."

The county's library-impact fee is \$191 for single-family homes.

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