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## Mitigation fees are approved

By: Kelly Arbor, Colfax Record Staff Writer

The Mitigation Impact Fees ordinance, affecting all new residential and commercial development within the city, was passed Tuesday by the Colfax City Council.

The new law requires the city to set fees based on the impact of new development on roads, drainage, parks and other city facilities. The mitigation fees schedule becomes effective in 60 days.

In the case of a single-family home, fees will be \$10,126.

Homes south of Canyon Way, served by Illinoistown Road or Plutes Way, will have an additional Bunch Creek culvert impact fee of \$3,416.

Per 1,000-square-feet, new retail space will have fees of \$11,513; office buildings \$9,647 and industrial buildings, \$2,197.

During Tuesday's public hearing, some citizens took issue with the new fee structure.

"The money is not going to stay here. It's going to go somewhere else," Heidi Allen said. "I own a business here in town. We would be priced right out of the game."

Her husband, Gordon Allen, backed her up.

"New development can't come at those prices," Gordon Allen said.

The Allens own Fitness 4 Life.

"On retail buildings, that's a deal killer," Ross Edwards told the council during the public hearing.

Most Colfax homes are built on speculation, according to Edwards.

"It's important to make sure we are not pricing ourselves out of the market," said Edwards, who stated developers will chose to build outside the city limits.

Placer County charges \$8,210 for a 2,000-square-foot house, including building permits, he said.

City Engineer Tom Leland had different figures, though.

For Colfax-area residents who live outside the city limits, county mitigation fees would be \$10,485, Leland said.

Leland provided council members with the mitigation fees for single-family homes in nearby cities: Loomis, \$14,646; Grass Valley, \$5,757; Rocklin, \$14,108 and Auburn, \$4,843.

"Every community situation is different," said City Manager Joan Phillipe.

Colfax only gets 17 cents per dollar of property tax, which doesn't provide enough revenue to make needed improvements, she said.

"It's deferred maintenance," City attorney P. Scott Browne told the council. "The reason the fees are as high as they are is because you didn't charge them before."

When Councilwoman Suzanne Roberts questioned the extra fees for the Bunch Creek area, Leland explained it was arrived at by estimating the cost of the culvert at \$600,000 and then dividing by 175, the number of new homes that could be built in that area.

Once the ordinance is in place, the city will be in a position to receive some of the mitigation fees Placer County collects from area residents, Mayor Sharon Gieras said.

City Councilman Josh Alpine cast the lone dissenting vote on the mitigation fees ordinance. He predicted the new fees would have a devastating effect on new retail development within the city, and might lead to a county area becoming a commercial corridor, similar to the outskirts of Auburn.

In other action at Tuesday's meeting, the council established a youth center monthly fee of \$155 for non-city residents.

The council also accepted the resignation of Tom Dunipace from the Design Review Committee and of John Potter from the Economic Development Commission. Angelo Napolitano was appointed to fill the Parks and Recreation Commission vacancy.

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