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Panel approves suspending impact fee collections, 7-0

BY **BETH REESE CRAVEY** | STORY UPDATED AT 11:45 PM ON SUNDAY, APR. 12, 2009

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The Clay County Planning Commission approved a proposed two-year moratorium Tuesday on collections of the county's transportation impact fee.

Next step for the moratorium is the County Commission, where the idea to suspend the fee originated. The County Commission will hold a public hearing and vote April 28.

The Planning Commission, an advisory board that makes recommendations to the County Commission, endorsed the moratorium by a vote of 7-0.

Assistant County Attorney Rebecca Lavie said the moratorium would be retroactive to Jan. 1 and run through Dec. 31, 2010. Anyone who has already paid the road fee would receive a refund, she said.

Ralph Puckhaber, Planning Commission chairman, said he could support the moratorium, but would oppose any effort

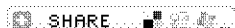
to abolish the fee. Because of the housing industry collapse, the fee has brought in little money since it was enacted Jan. 1, but the revenue source is warranted for the future to help fund needed transportation improvements, he said.

On March 10, the County Commission tentatively voted to impose the moratorium on the fee after a long line of people

in the real estate and development business complained it hampered their ability to get housing and commercial projects off the ground. Many asked that the fee be abolished.

The road fee is imposed on all new development, while a separate impact fee for the school district is imposed on new residential development. Both fees are typically passed on to buyers and, combined, add about \$12,000 to the cost of a house.

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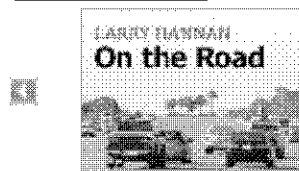
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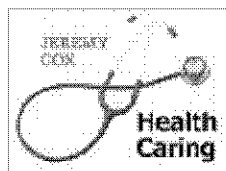
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