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Local

Impact fees for new housing in Anne Arundel could go up

Jason Flanagan, The Examiner

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BALTIMORE -

The [Anne Arundel County Planning Advisory Board](#) wants the county to raise its impact fees to meet the rising costs of construction.

"After you get over the initial shock and see how little those numbers have gone up over the years, [raising the fees] is a logical conclusion that most informed residents would make," said [Michelle Corkadel](#), the board's chairwoman.

The board supported a letter to [County Executive John R. Leopold](#) backing data from a recent report on impact fees — which Corkadel called a conservative and realistic outlook — and recommending higher fees. Leopold has said he wants to raise the impact fees.

The county is getting far less on the dollar, meaning taxpayers are bearing the burnt of mitigation, according to the report.

For example, current impact fees cover less than 12 percent of the cost of new roads, and only 39 percent of school construction. The county's impact fees are far below the state average for similar fees.

The main culprit, said the report's author [James Nicholaus](#), is that construction costs are far outpacing the impact fee, even with inflationary increases.

The board also is recommending the county raise its fees annually based on the construction cost index, not the current method of using the Consumer Price Index because it better reflects construction costs.

Several County Council members have said the fees should be connected with the new school capacity chart, which the council also will be developing in the coming months.

"There is a general sense that the chart is flawed and the fees are too low," said [Council Vice Chairman Ed Reilly, R-District 7](#). "Where we end up will be a long and tedious road."

The [Home Builders Association of Maryland](#) just received the report and does not have an official position, said [Eliot Powell](#), the association's vice president.

"We've been expecting impact fee increases," said Powell, who would not elaborate on what increase the association would be comfortable with.

"Hopefully the county executive will include us in the debate, and we have no reason to believe he won't."

The board was to review proposed impact fee changes, but the legislation wasn't ready. Officials from the planning department said the bill will be ready soon, likely by the board's Jan. 3 meeting.

Fast fact

Impact fees are paid by developers when they build new houses.

The fees pay for road, school and public safety improvements needed to accommodate expansion.

jflanagan@baltimoreexaminer.com

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