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Proposal to lower traffic fees for senior housing debated in El Dorado County

By Cathy Locke

create a lower fee category for such age-restricted developments.

But several people, including

industry, cautioned against shifting costs to other segments of the population.

Mike McDougall of MJM Properties, developer of the Carson Creek area south of Highway 50 in El

Dorado Hills, asked that traffic fees be lowered for residential developments restricted to people age 55

and older.

He cited an Institute of Transportation Engineers' report that a home in an age-restricted community generates 3.71 average daily trips, significantly less than the 10.1 per home the county projected for Carson Creek.

The traffic impact fee, McDougall argued, should be proportionate to the development's impact on the road system. That fee for a single-family home in the county ranges from \$15,430 to \$41,700, depending on location.

The supervisors agreed that seniors are less likely to commute to jobs and tend to shop locally, reducing the burden on roadways and boosting the economy.

Several area jurisdictions, including Placerville, Roseville and Elk Grove, have less-costly traffic fees for senior housing. The fee for a home in a seniors community runs about 63 percent to 75 percent less than for a home in a standard development.

But in El Dorado County, where new development must pay for road improvements needed to serve growth, a break for one type of development could shift the burden to another.

Richard Shepard, transportation director, said although senior developments would result in less

traffic, that might not reduce the overall need for road improvements.

Some people argued that seniors in El Dorado County aren't necessarily the folks who need a financial break.

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"The seniors in this county are the richest people in this county," said Jim Alderink, a member of the Taxpayers Association of El Dorado County, adding that he, too, is a senior.

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"What about the \$10-an-hour people?" he asked. "You can make a very good case that they're the ones that need the break."

If fees are lowered for age-restricted units, developers might be more inclined to build senior housing instead of the entry-level homes needed for people who work in the county, Shepard cautioned in a [Written Report](#)

Judy Mathat, a real estate agent and president of the Shingle Springs-Cameron Park Chamber of Commerce, suggested levying lower fees for smaller homes to encourage more affordable housing for all [age groups](#)

Although the supervisors held to their request for a separate fee category for age-restricted developments, they agreed to allow staff members time to work with an advisory group on the details.

The new category will be included in the annual update of the traffic impact fee program to be presented [in May](#).

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