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# Riverside County supervisors considering reducing developers' fees

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**10:00 PM PDT on Monday, July 13, 2009**

**By JULIA GLICK**
**The Press-Enterprise**

Riverside County supervisors could cut in half the fees that homebuilders pay to fund libraries, fire stations, parks, roads and other needs of growing communities.

Supporters of reducing development impact fees say the proposal, which comes before the board today, would create jobs and help revive the region's battered housing industry. Some skeptics have questioned whether lower fees would achieve much, given the region's ongoing foreclosure crisis and collapsed home values.

The fee reduction would last one year. Supervisors are scheduled to introduce the measure today and could vote to adopt it as soon as next week.

"We believe this is the right thing to do right now," said Mark Knorringa, CEO of the Riverside County chapter of the California Building Industry Association, which helped craft the proposal. "Housing is a big, big part of the economy that needs to be reinvigorated. And it's a tremendous job generator."

Lower fees would give developers incentive to build, he said.

Beaumont, Corona, Menifee and Perris recently cut their impact fees for set periods of time, according to information from the chapter.

No San Bernardino County governments have adopted such fee reductions. However, the Baldy View chapter of the Building Industry Association encouraged cities to do so at a conference last week. County government uses a different fee structure so such cuts would not apply, said Baldy View Deputy Executive Officer Carlos Rodriguez.

Riverside County spokesman Ray Smith said the impact of proposed fee cuts to the county budget would depend on how effectively the measure promotes new homebuilding.

"Potentially, it could be a couple million dollars," he said. "But the idea is to stimulate the economy, and if we are able to do that and get some people back to work, then it is a positive impact."

The proposal would shave about $2,000 off the roughly $4,000 fee for building one home in the Eastvale area of the county, Knorringa said. That's just an example because fees vary from one part of the county to another, he said.

The county projects that new single-family home permits will decline to about 2,000 in 2009. The high was almost 30,000 in 2005.

Supervisor Bob Buster said many residents have contacted him saying they oppose cutting fees for builders.

Buster told supervisors in April that he would rather see a plan that gives the break to homebuyers, not builders. He said Monday that he was still skeptical but willing to support the proposal because it's temporary.

"If it can get something started in the next year, then the loss of fees in exchange for the new jobs and the economic development could balance out," Buster said. "But it's not something I would support for the long term."

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**Fee cuts**

Riverside County supervisors will consider a proposal to cut in half the fees that homebuilders pay for infrastructure and community facilities.

**When:** Starts 9 a.m. today

**Where:** Board chambers, 4080 Lemon St., Riverside

**For the agenda:** www.clerkoftheboard. co.riverside.ca.us/agendas/2009.htm

**Watch online:** http://bosvideo.co.riverside.ca.us/

ppportal/agenda/webcast.aspx