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## City can't keep up with east Mesa growth

By Lindsay Butler  
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East Mesa is growing faster than the city can plan, and city codes aren't keeping up. Mesa's development department is proposing a change to the city code that requires developers to pay for improvements near their property. This will be especially important near the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport and GM Proving Ground - areas many consider to be the future economic hub of the East Valley.

Typically, these improvements include water lines and street improvements and are required to be completed before the city will issue building permits.

But in cases where the city hasn't decided where the roads should be, it doesn't make sense to require construction or accept in-lieu payments until years down the road.

So the city is suggesting a change that would allow it to push back construction or the payments until a later date.

"It's just another way to give the city flexibility," said Christine Zielonka, development services director.

Zielonka said the change was inspired by CMC Steel, a \$130 million steel mill that will bring 110 jobs and recycle metal into rebar for construction.

The city competed to land the company, which will be built near Germann Road and Meridian Drive on the east fringes of town.

"Meridian goes along CMC, but we're not in a position to require them to build the road," Zielonka said. "In that area, it doesn't even exist as a road."

The change would only apply to commercial or industrial districts - so no houses - and the developer would have to provide financial assurance to the city that the construction costs would be paid when the city needs it.

This also benefits the city because the road improvement costs would be calculated at the time of construction, instead of years before the construction would actually occur.

The change to the ordinance will be introduced at today's City Council meeting and voted on Nov. 19.