

A COLLECTION OF TWENTY-NINE CLASSICALLY INSPIRED BAYFRONT CONDOMINIUM RESIDENCES

La Bellasara 

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SATURDAY



Shake your hips

The Monday-afternoon hula dancing classes in Englewood emphasize the aerobic, thank you very much. Saturday in *Play*

» [Coming Soon](#)

Guest columnist — >

State home builders' group says impact-fee bill is needed

There's been much talk recently about the need to improve Florida's growth-management system. The issue has gained so much momentum that our elected leaders have made growth management a top priority for the current legislative session.

Florida, the fourth largest state, is home to more than 16 million citizens. Our robust economy, wealth of jobs and overall quality of life are among what attracts new citizens to our state each day.

While home builders have been working hard to help meet the housing demands of our ever-growing population, Florida's infrastructure has not maintained the steady pace necessary to meet our needs. Schools are crowded, highways are clogged and our water supply system is often overtasked.

Florida's growth-management system does not receive adequate funding from state coffers, thereby forcing local governments to become "creative" and find other sources of revenue to meet their infrastructure needs. Routinely, municipalities impose impact fees on new construction as a way to make "growth pay its fair share."

But this system is unbalanced. New construction is the only growth source being taxed with hefty impact fees. Buyers of cars and trucks, for instance, are not forced to pay a fee for the additional burden another vehicle has on our heavily traveled highways.

Making matters worse, there's a lack of uniformity in the way new-home construction impact fees are imposed. Some counties' impact fees are merely a few hundred dollars; others are as high as \$20,000 (that's in addition to the price of the home). Some counties allow for impact-fee credits based on the amount of taxes and other fees paid, but others do not. And last, new-construction impact fees are being assessed for everything from parks and recreation to law enforcement, libraries, roads and schools.

With the Legislature so closely focused on growth management, now is the appropriate time to strike a balance in the way Florida funds its infrastructure. Members of the Florida Home Builders Association believe in paying our fair share, but new-home construction shouldn't be forced to carry the entire growth problem.

In Gov. Jeb Bush's recent State of the State address, he said, "Development must be tied directly to the infrastructure it will use, and growth decisions must be made accordingly."

We couldn't agree more.

That's why we are supporting legislation that would give counties more power to raise

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