

WESH.com

Impact Fees To Soar In 2 Counties

POSTED: 10:02 pm EDT October 23, 2007

UPDATED: 6:55 pm EDT October 24, 2007

Orange County Commissioners unanimously passed an impact fee increase on Tuesday.

Impact fees have helped pay for new schools to sustain the growth in Florida, but several Central Florida counties said the fees weren't keeping up with the costs.

Some residents think an increase has to happen if they are going to possibly have enough schools, while others worry it will put a bigger dent in an already sluggish housing market.

New homes are constantly being built in Central Florida, especially in southwest Orange County. Bridgewater Middle just opened this year.

Until Tuesday, the impact fee on new homes in Orange County was \$7,000 and was used to pay for new schools. The newly approved proposal is meant to keep up with increasing costs by raising that fee.

The increase will make Orange County the most expensive in the state for school impact fees.

Orange County's Mayor, Richard Crotty, wasn't sure where he stood before the public hearing started.

"It could have a chilling impact on the housing market, but it's a tough call because at the same time we have an obligation to provide classroom space for our kids," Crotty said.

The Central Florida Home Builders Association is not opposed to the higher impact fee as long as buyers know they will pay for the increase.

"The consumers are paying for the extra impact fees, and if the consumers are ok with it, you know, let it be," Carmen Domingues of the Central Florida HBA said.

Seminole County also increased their impact fee to just more than \$6,000 on Tuesday. The county plans to work out a rebate system for people in affordable housing.

Despite the increase, Seminole County has the lowest impact fees in Central Florida.

Volusia County's fees are currently around \$9,000, but that number may rise soon.

Lake County charges \$10,000 in impact fees, but a proposal to raise the fee by \$2,000 or \$3,000 is up for consideration.

Fees in Osceola County vary by district, but the average is \$17,000 per home.

Related To Story



 **Video: Impact Fees**

The entire impact fee in Orange County now totals around \$17,000 as well.

✉ *To comment on this story, send an e-mail to [Dave McDaniel](#).*

Copyright 2007 by [WESH.COM](#). All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.