

Use their money

Letter to the editor, [State Port Pilot](#), 08.09.23

Development in Brunswick County is proliferating rapidly, impacting us every day. Whether we're stuck in traffic in road construction, enduring noise and fugitive dust impacts from building projects, or watching in dismay as our beautiful natural habitat disappears, the signs are everywhere. Developers are snapping up available land, getting local governments to approve their plans, and breaking ground.

Brunswick County's Engineering Department has felt the pressure and requested additional staffing to handle the enormous increase in workload. The Department oversees Brunswick County's capital improvement projects including in-office review of plans and field construction inspection for water supply, sewer, and stormwater project plans submitted by developers. The Engineering Department's cry for help in the face of the daunting "tsunami" of projects should be a wake-up call for our County Commissioners and all local politicians.

Since Brunswick County is the fastest growing in North Carolina (and one of the fastest growing in America), you might think that we have a robust, well-staffed Engineering Department. In reality, it's just seven people. They're receiving submittals for review at the rate of 10 to 15 a week. They're working hard, but they're caught in a completely untenable situation.

Brunswick County Commissioners recently approved adding two new engineering project managers, amending the county's budget accordingly. The requested money — \$235,310 — is a drop in the bucket compared to what's needed.

Our local politicians need to recognize that development comes at a price. It's vital to ensure that these costs are borne by the developers, not by the taxpayers who endure the project impacts. For too long, developers have privatized their significant profits while getting us to fund the infrastructure improvements necessitated by their projects. When it's time to pay the piper, let's use their money, not our tax dollars.

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