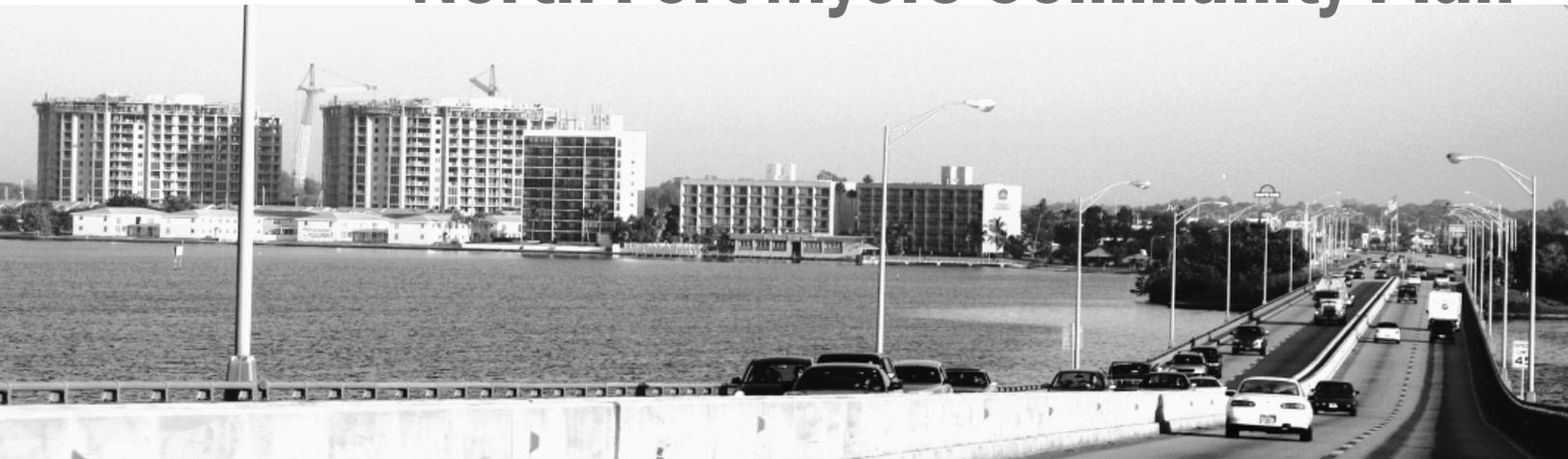


North Fort Myers Community Plan



Prepared by

The North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel

with assistance from

**Lee County Department of Community Development
HDR Community Planning + Urban Design**

Final Report | February 2008

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I Introduction

Planning Process

The North Fort Myers Community Plan is the result of an intensive, grassroots planning effort led by the North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel with support from the Lee County Board of County Commissioners and County Staff. The Panel, composed of representatives from North Fort Myers Civic Association and North Fort Myers residents and organized into 9 subcommittees, worked with the County and the County's consultant, HDR, to identify issues, test alternatives, and define plan goals, objectives, and policies, and set forth a multi-year implementation plan for projects and initiatives affecting community livability and economic vitality.

The current effort, the results of which are represented in this report, is the first phase in a three phase planning process.

- **Phase I. Preliminary Planning & Lee Plan Amendments.** The first phase of the community planning effort included an evaluation of major issues facing the future growth, development and conservation of the North Fort Myers Community. The evaluation included the collection and analysis of relevant data, extensive public engagement, and coordination with Lee County representatives and the consulting firm HDR. The result of this initial effort is the establishment of a Community Vision Statement and the submission of a Lee County Comprehensive Plan Amendment to add Goals, Objectives and Policies to the Lee Plan to provide additional direction in evaluating future development approval requests.
- **Phase II. Sector Planning & Land Development Code Improvements.** The second phase will include the preparation of Sector Plans for key development and redevelopment areas and the preparation of Land Development Code amendments addressing land use and redevelopment issues as well as building design, landscaping, signage, and existing development review processes.
- **Phase III. Future Land Use Map Amendments & Focused Planning.** Phase III is anticipated to include very specific amendments to the Future Land Use Map of the Lee Plan and continued analysis and planning for key issues identified in Phase I. This may include the identification of necessary roadway improvements, modifications to land use categories, and the creation of specific land use overlays. This Phase will be a detailed evaluation and will build upon the foundation established by the Phase I amendments.

Plan Structure

The CP provides a framework for decision-makers whose actions and investment decisions affect the future livability, sustainability, and economic vitality of North Fort Myers. The Plan offers residents, property owners, developers, county officials, and other stakeholders a clear statement of community preferences and a review of policy initiatives, regulatory changes, and County actions designed to help realize North Fort Myers's vision for the future.

The Plan provides a statement of the community's vision for the future, a review of existing conditions, a summary of issues and opportunities defined by the Community Planning Panel, and preliminary goal, objective and policy statements for incorporation into the Lee Plan. The Plan also sets forth future work required to address the community's issues and implement specific recommendations for each element. More detailed planning for Town Centers, Land Development Code improvements, public facilities assessments, and feasibility assessments for special projects like the creation of medical district or corridor are also included in the Plan.

2 Vision

Over the course of the current planning effort, a new vision for the future of North Ft Myers has emerged and come into sharper focus. The following phrases, describing a brighter future for the community, capture the essence of the vision and provide a foundation for the plan's goals, objectives, and policies:

Town Center developments along the Caloosahatchee River and on Bayshore Road at I-75 offer new destinations for living, shopping, working, and socializing. Designed with walkable streets and streetscapes, ground level shops and restaurants, high quality housing, and connections to nearby parks, waterfronts, and natural areas, these new Centers are becoming signposts for positive changes throughout the community.

New retail and mixed use development cluster in Neighborhood Centers and along revitalized commercial corridors. Unlike the auto-oriented development that used to line major roadways, North Fort Myers's new neighborhood centers and corridors are pedestrian-friendly, with attractive landscaping and quality architecture.

Older neighborhoods are experiencing a quiet renaissance—first-time homebuyers, recent retirees, and new investors are fixing-up older housing stock, building compatible infill housing, sprucing-up yards, and working together to ensure properties and public rights-of-way are well-maintained, safe, and attractive.

New buildings are designed to fit the area's early design character—simple, sturdy building forms, high quality materials, protection from the elements, and generous native vegetation create a distinctive local vernacular.

Landscape gateways, extensive streetscape and landscape improvements, and new pedestrian and bicycle facilities reinforce the North Fort Myers's reputation as great place to live, work, and visit.

Greenways, blueways, and trail systems offer unique recreational amenities, linking together North Fort Myers's neighborhoods with the region's parks and recreational facilities, conservation lands, and new points of access to the Caloosahatchee River and its tributaries.

3 Planning Context

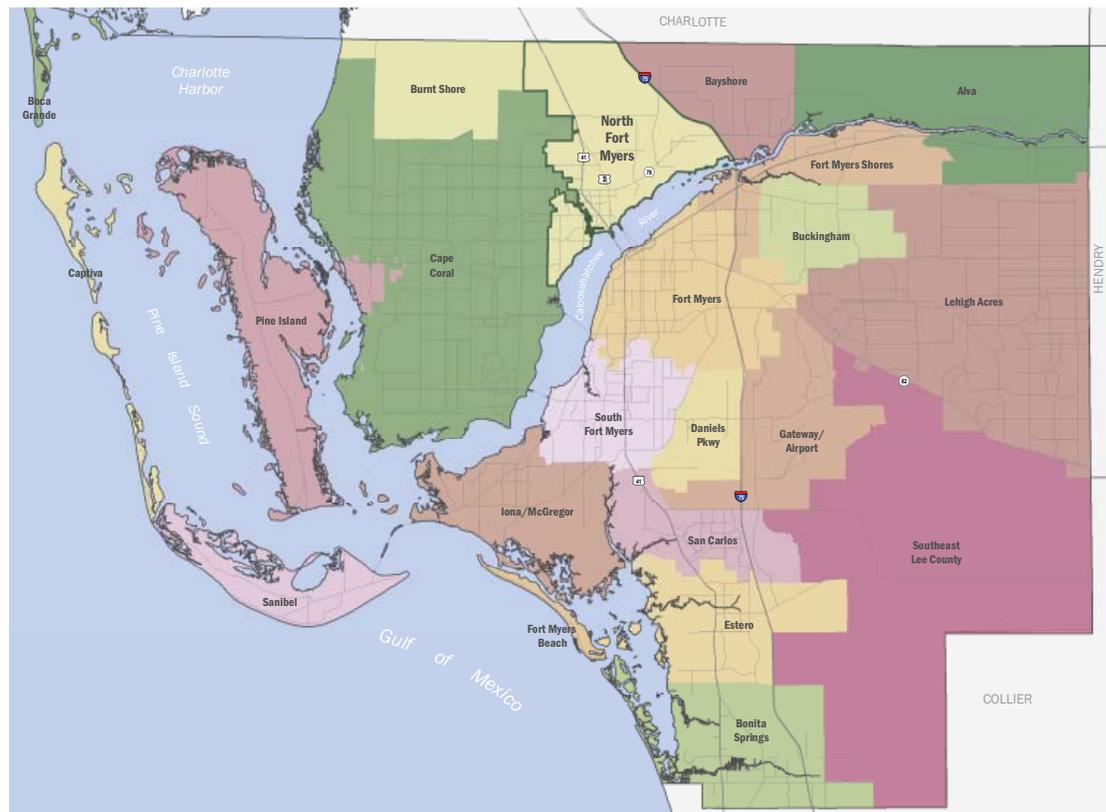
Place in Region

The North Fort Myers Planning Area is strategically located along major transportation routes, including Interstate 75 and US 41. With its close proximity to major regional amenities, North Fort Myers has easy access to downtowns, major employment centers, and natural amenities. [examples?] North Fort Myers is situated on the banks of the Caloosahatchee River, with over 10 miles of water frontage.

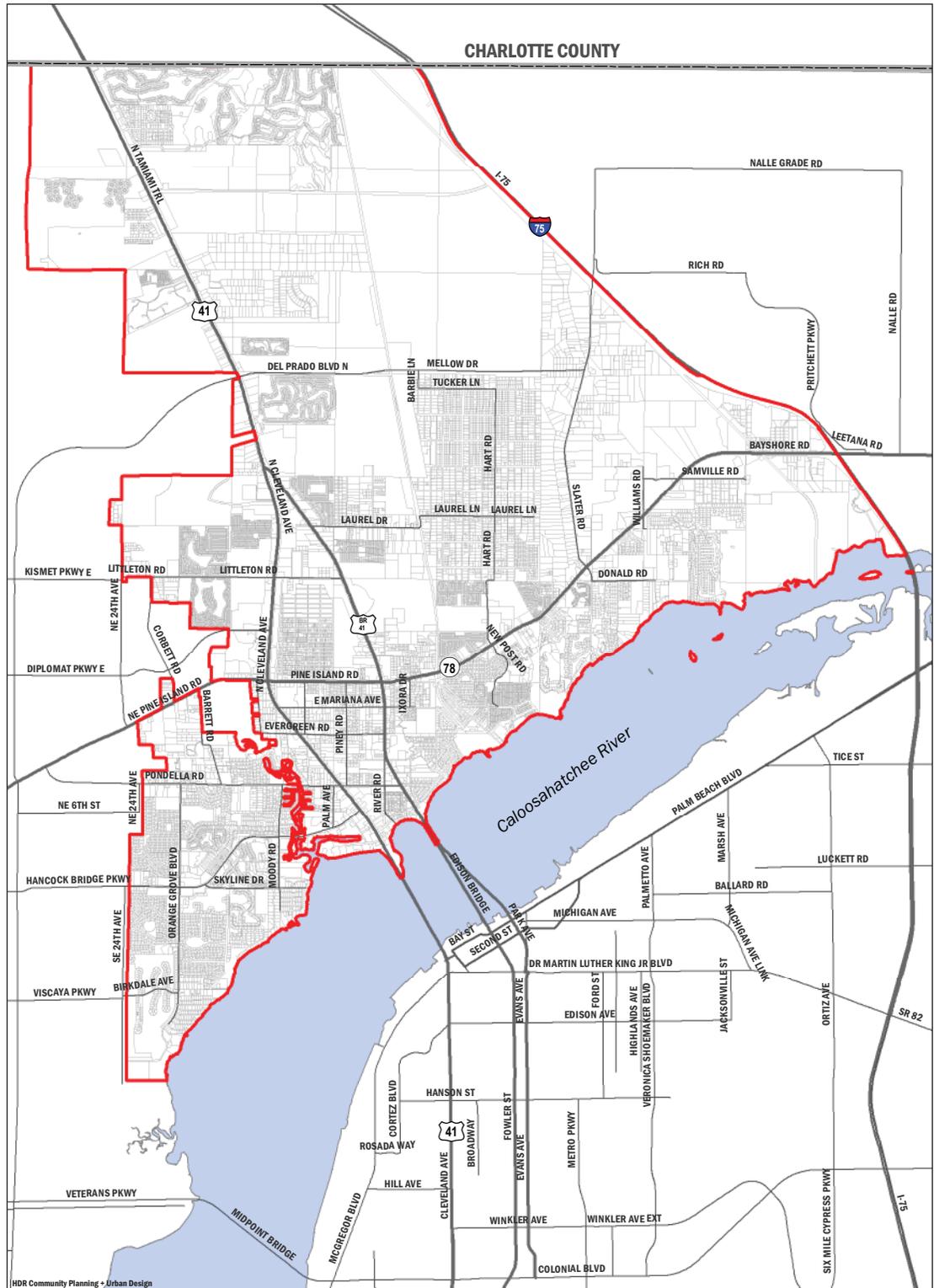
For planning purposes, Lee County is divided into 22 Planning Communities. (Map 1) The North Fort Myers Community Planning Area is located in the north central portion of Lee County. (Map 2) With an area of 25,132 acres, North Fort Myers makes up 4.8 percent of the total county land area. The Planning area borders Charlotte County to the north, the City of Cape Coral and the Burnt Shore Planning Area to the west, the Caloosahatchee River to the south, and the Bayshore Planning Area and Interstate 75 along the eastern edge.

Map 1.
Lee County Planning Areas.

North Fort Myers is located in the north central portion of Lee County between the City of Cape Coral, the Caloosahatchee River, Bayshore Community, and Charlotte County.



Map 2.
North Fort Myers Community
Planning Area.



Demographics

According to the 1990 and 2000 US Census, North Fort Myers experienced growth during the period between 1990 and 2000. Within the forty US Census block groups that make up the North Fort Myers Planning Area, over 4,000 housing units were constructed, an increase of 18 percent. The area grew by almost 6,000 residents, representing a growth of 13 percent. Lee County grew at a much faster rate, gaining over 100,000 residents, or 32 percent, during the same period. The County's housing stock also grew quickly at 30 percent, an increase of 56,000 units.

Most of the growth in North Fort Myers was located in subdivisions south of the county line along US 41 north of Del Prado Boulevard. Almost two-thirds of the new households, housing units, and population occurred in the four block groups that make up the following subdivisions; Heron's Glen Country Club, Pine Lakes Country Club, Lake Fairways Country Club, Del Tura Country Club, Sabal Springs Golf and Racquet Club, and Tara Lakes.

In 2000, 83 percent of the 21,543 households in North Fort Myers were owner-occupied. Lee County's home ownership rate is lower than North Fort Myers at 77 percent. Owner-occupancy in North Fort Myers was highest in the subdivisions off US 41 south of the county line, west of US 41 along Littleton Road, east of Orange Grove Boulevard south of Hancock Bridge Parkway, and south of Bayshore Road between Interstate 75 and Samville Road. Owner-occupancy was lowest between US 41 and US Business 41, west of US 41 between Pondella Road and Pine Island Road, and in the Suncoast Estates subdivision south of Mellow Drive.

Like Lee County, one-third of the 27,300 housing units in North Fort Myers were constructed during the 1980s. North Fort Myers has a higher percentage of older housing stock than the County, with 30 percent built during the 1970s and 17 percent built before 1969. Twenty percent of housing units in the planning area were constructed during the 1990s. Comparatively, one-quarter of Lee County's housing units were built during the 1970s, 16 percent before 1969, and one-quarter during the 1990s. Older housing units built before 1969 are located between Bayshore Road and the Caloosahatchee River on the east and west sides of US Business 41 between US 41 and the railroad right-of-way. The newer residential developments built during the 1980s and 1990s are located south of the county line off US 41 and south of Bayshore Road between Interstate 75 and New Post Road.

North Fort Myers also has a higher percentage of mobile homes than Lee County. Mobile homes make up 17 percent of the County's housing stock, while they account for over half of North Fort Myers' total housing units. Between 1990 and 2000, North Fort Myers added 2,000 new mobile homes and 1,500 new single-family detached homes. Mobile homes are primarily located in the central portion of North Fort Myers, west of US 41 north and south of Littleton Road, and in the Suncoast Estates subdivision between Mellow Drive and Bayshore Road. Almost 1,600 of the mobile homes constructed during the 1990s were in the two block groups south of the county border along US 41.

Thirty-five percent of North Fort Myers dwelling units are single-family detached units. Neighborhoods that primarily consist of detached single-family residences are located in the subdivisions south of Bayshore Road between Interstate 75 and Samville Road and in Lochmoor Waterway Estates south of Pondella Road between the City of Cape Coral border and Yellow Fever Creek. Multi-family housing with two or more dwelling units in a structure, makes up 12 percent

of the area's housing stock and is located south of Bayshore Road between New Post Road and Slater Road, west of US 41 between Pine Island Road and Hancock Bridge Parkway, and north of Bayshore Road between US 41 and US Business 41.

The average household size in Lee County was 2.31 persons per unit in 2000. In North Fort Myers, fifteen out of the forty block groups had average household sizes that were greater than the County's average. The block groups with the highest averages, or greater than 2.7 persons per unit, are located in the northeast portion of the Planning area north of Bayshore Road between Interstate 75 and Williams Road, south of Mellow Drive along Hart Road, and along the border of Cape Coral between Pondella Road and Hancock Bridge Parkway. The areas with the lowest average household size are located west of US 41 north of Pine Island Road.

Land Use & Development

Development Overview

North Fort Myers developed from the mid to late 20th century as a bedroom community for Fort Myers. It includes a mix of single-family homes on large lots, mobile home parks, and commercial development along major roadways. Early development was oriented along US 41 and Hart Road. More recent development has occurred south of the County border, along Bayshore Road near the Interstate 75 interchange, and along Hancock Bridge Parkway east of the boundary with the City of Cape Coral. Recently, significant tracts have been purchased for conservation, including Prairie Pines, Caloosahatchee Creeks, Yellow Fever Creek, and Powell Creek.

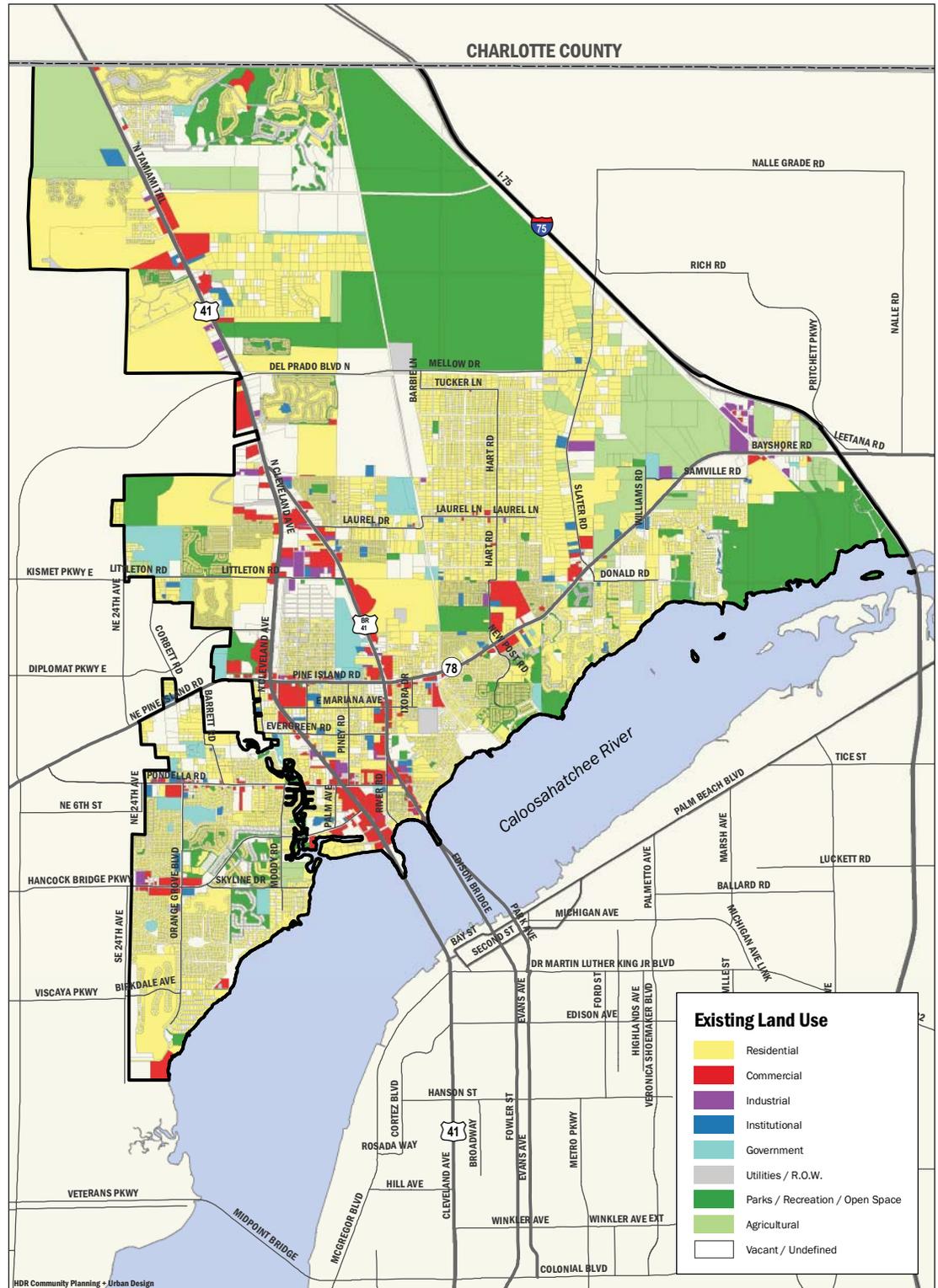
Existing Land Use

Based on an evaluation of the Land Use Code found in the County property database, North Fort Myers was categorized using the following existing land uses as shown in Map 3: Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Government, Utilities/Right-of-Way, Parks/Recreation/Open Space, Agricultural, and Vacant/Undefined. At 43 percent, the Residential Land Use takes up the highest percentage of land use within the North Fort Myers Planning Area. Twenty percent of the planning area is single-family residential and 19 percent is mobile home residential. Residential land is located in developments along US 41, Hart Road, Hancock Bridge Parkway, and Bayshore Road.

Covering 4,600 acres, the Parks/Recreation/Open Space land use category makes up the second highest percent of land area in North Fort Myers. This includes the extensive 20/20 Conservation Lands located at the northeast and southeast corners of the Planning Area. Almost 1,900 acres, or 8 percent, are in an Agricultural use. Over 4,000 acres, or 17 percent, of the Planning area total acreage is Vacant. Large parcels of vacant land are found in the north portion of the Planning Area along the railroad right-of-way. Smaller vacant parcels are scattered throughout the rest of North Fort Myers.

Commercial land use makes up 4 percent of the Planning Area acreage and is primarily located along the three major roadways; US 41, US Business 41, Bayshore Road, and Pine Island Road. Industrial use is located on less than one percent of the Planning Area acreage, and is clustered

Map 3.
Existing Land Use



around the intersection of Interstate 75 and Bayshore Road and along Littleton Road between US 41 and US Business 41. Distributed throughout North Fort Myers, the Institutional and Government land uses make up 1 percent and 2.4 percent, respectively, of the total acreage. Utilities and Right-of-way account for 2 percent of the North Fort Myers area. (Figure 1)

Figure 1. Existing Land Use

Land Use Category	Parcels	Acreage	% of Total
Residential	17,945	9,737.2	42.6%
<i>Single family</i>	9,837	4,827.5	21.1%
<i>Mobile Home Subdivision</i>	6,069	2,097.8	9.2%
<i>Mobile Home Park</i>	80	2,292.8	10.0%
<i>Co-operatives</i>	1,648	186.4	0.8%
<i>Multi-family</i>	311	332.8	1.5%
Commercial	365	936.9	4.1%
Industrial	83	189.2	0.8%
Institutional	80	241.3	1.1%
Government	52	558.2	2.4%
Vacant	2,611	4,074.4	17.8%
Utilities/R.O.W.	114	469.8	2.1%
Parks, Recreation, and Open Space	302	4,620.6	20.2%
Agricultural	96	1,893.4	8.3%
No Description/Other	98	122.5	0.5%
TOTAL	21,746	22,843	100.0%

Source: Lee County Property Record Database

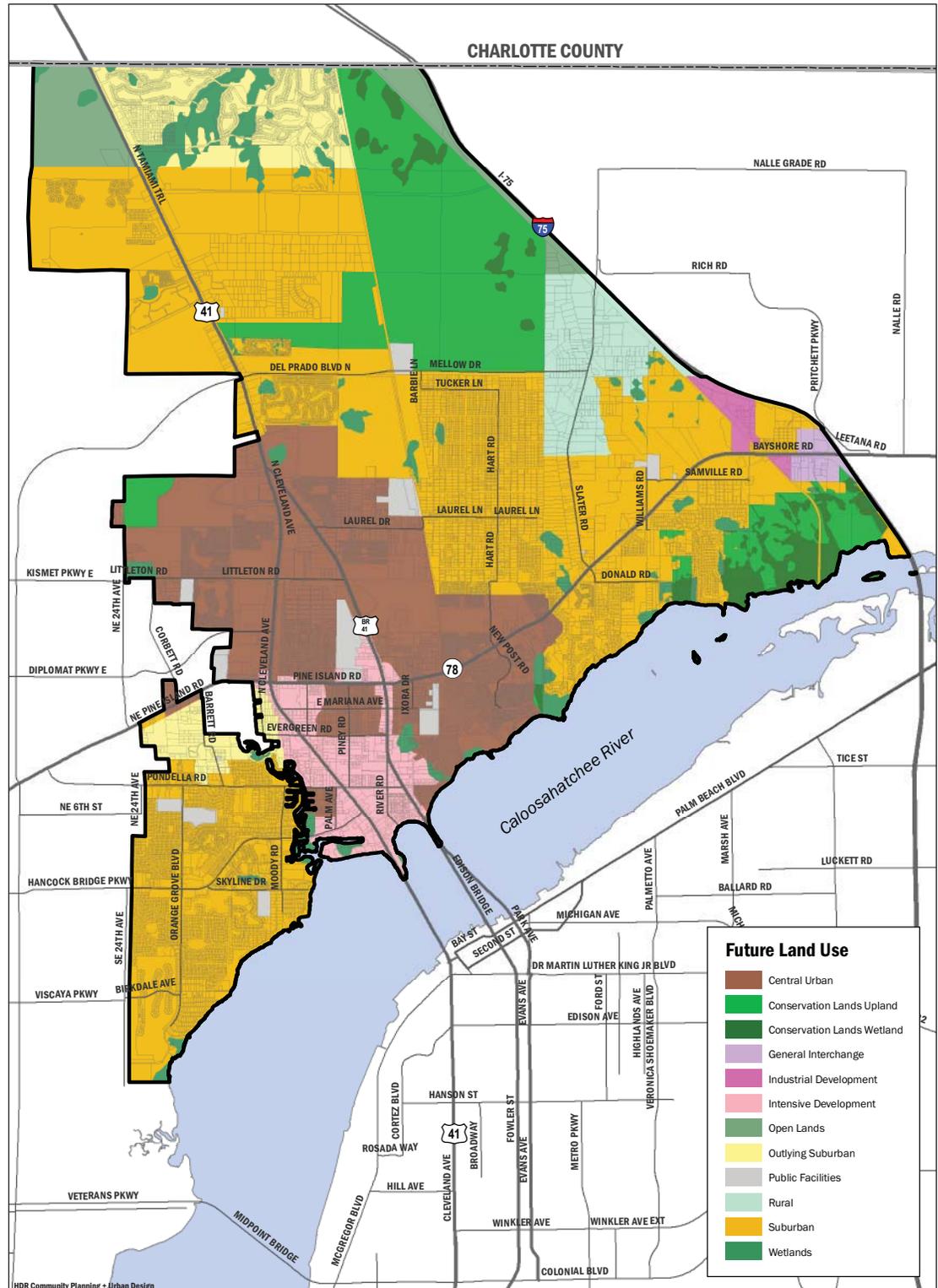
Future Land Use

The Future Land Uses within the North Fort Myers Community Planning Area range from Intensive Development to Conservation. (Map 4) At the center of the Planning Area, the commercial corridors along US 41 and US Business 41 are designated as Central Urban and Intensive Development. The Suburban, Outlying Suburban, and Public Facilities Future Land Uses extend outward to the northeast and southwest. At the northwest, northeast, and southeast corners of the Planning Area, the Future Land Uses have been designated as Conservation Lands Upland, Conservation Lands Wetland, Rural, Open Land, and Wetlands. Around the Interstate 75 interchange at Bayshore Road, the Future Land Uses are Industrial Development and General Interchange.

Development Activity

According to County property and development activity records, over 40 percent of the North Fort Myers Planning Area is developed with property improvement values greater than \$10,000. Twenty percent, or 3,300 acres, is undeveloped. This includes vacant and underutilized land with

Map 4.
Future Land Use



an assessed property value less than \$10,000. Currently, almost one-quarter, or 5,400 acres, of North Fort Myers has pending or approved plans for development or redevelopment. (Figure 2)

Figure 2. Development Activity

	Parcels	Acreage	% of Total
North Fort Myers	21,746	22,843	100.00%
Developed	17,278	9,417	41.2%
Undeveloped	3,293	4,743	20.8%
Pending/Approved	590	5,432	23.8%

Source: Lee County Property Record Database

Numerous large-scale residential developments have been approved or are pending approval in the following locations: several residential subdivisions south of the county line, north and south of Mellow Drive east of North Tamiami Trail, and north of Bayshore Road west of Interstate 75. In addition, several smaller-scale developments have been approved or have approvals pending along US 41, Hancock Bridge Parkway, and Bayshore Road. (Map 5)

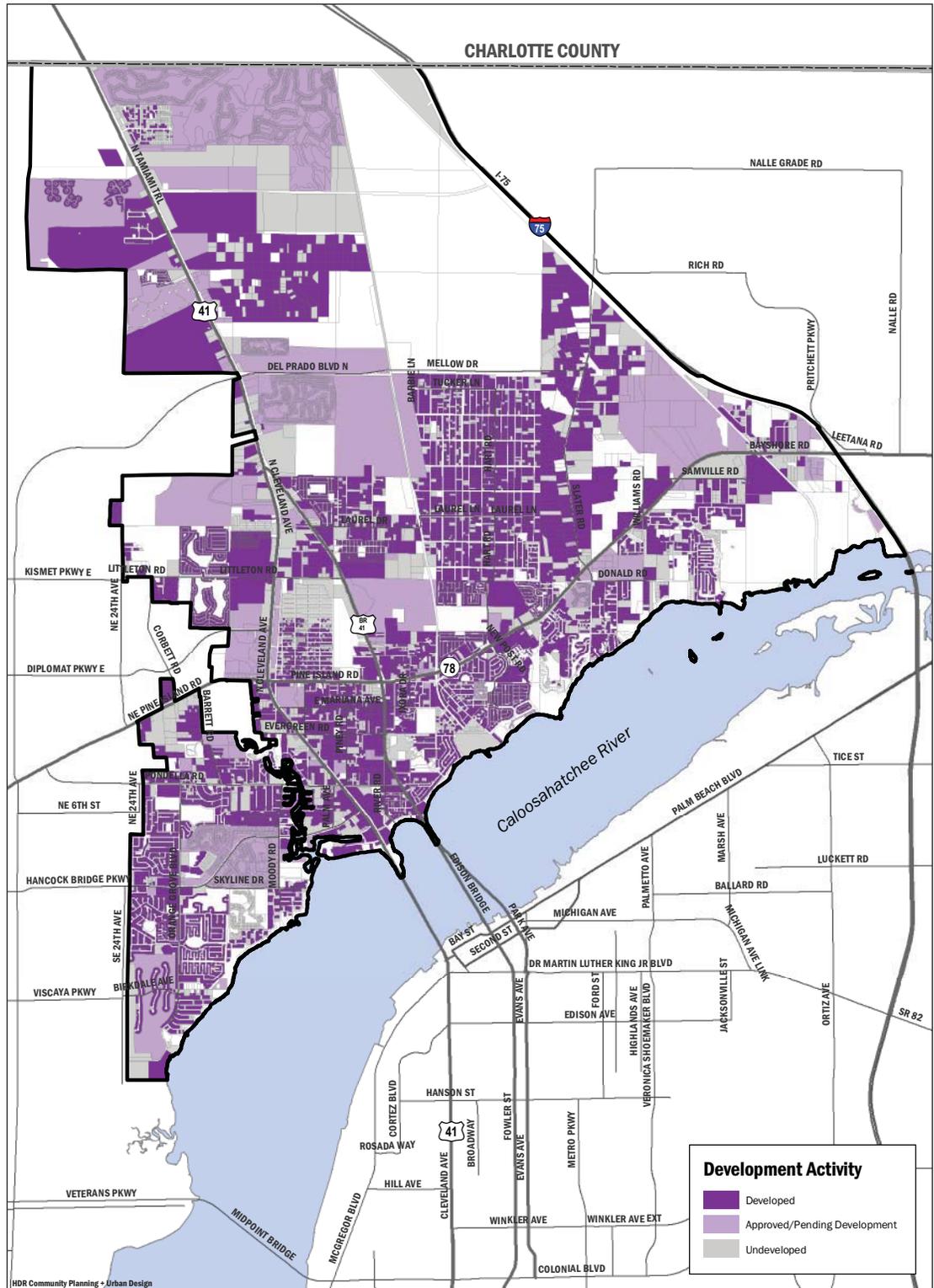
Large tracts of undeveloped land without pending development approvals or protection through purchase or conservation easement are located north and south of Nalle Grade Road south of the Herons Glen subdivision, east of the intersection of US 41 and US Business 41, south of Littleton Road east of US 41, south of Pine Island Road west of Barrett Road, and between Bayshore Road and Samville Road. In addition, the following areas currently in an Agricultural use may be considered as having development potential; parcels north of Bayshore Road west of Williams Road and along Bayshore at the I-75 interchange.

Residential Development

The majority, or 87 percent, of the 9,400 acres of developed land in North Fort Myers is used for residential purposes. (Map 6) One-half of the residential area is mobile home park, mobile home subdivision, or co-operative. Most of the 4,000 acres of mobile home or co-operative residential is located off US 41, US Business 41, and Hart Road. Only 4 percent of developed residential land is multi-family and is primarily located in the southern half of the Planning Area. The remaining 3,780 acres is single-family residential, which is also located in the lower half of North Fort Myers south of Bayshore Road.

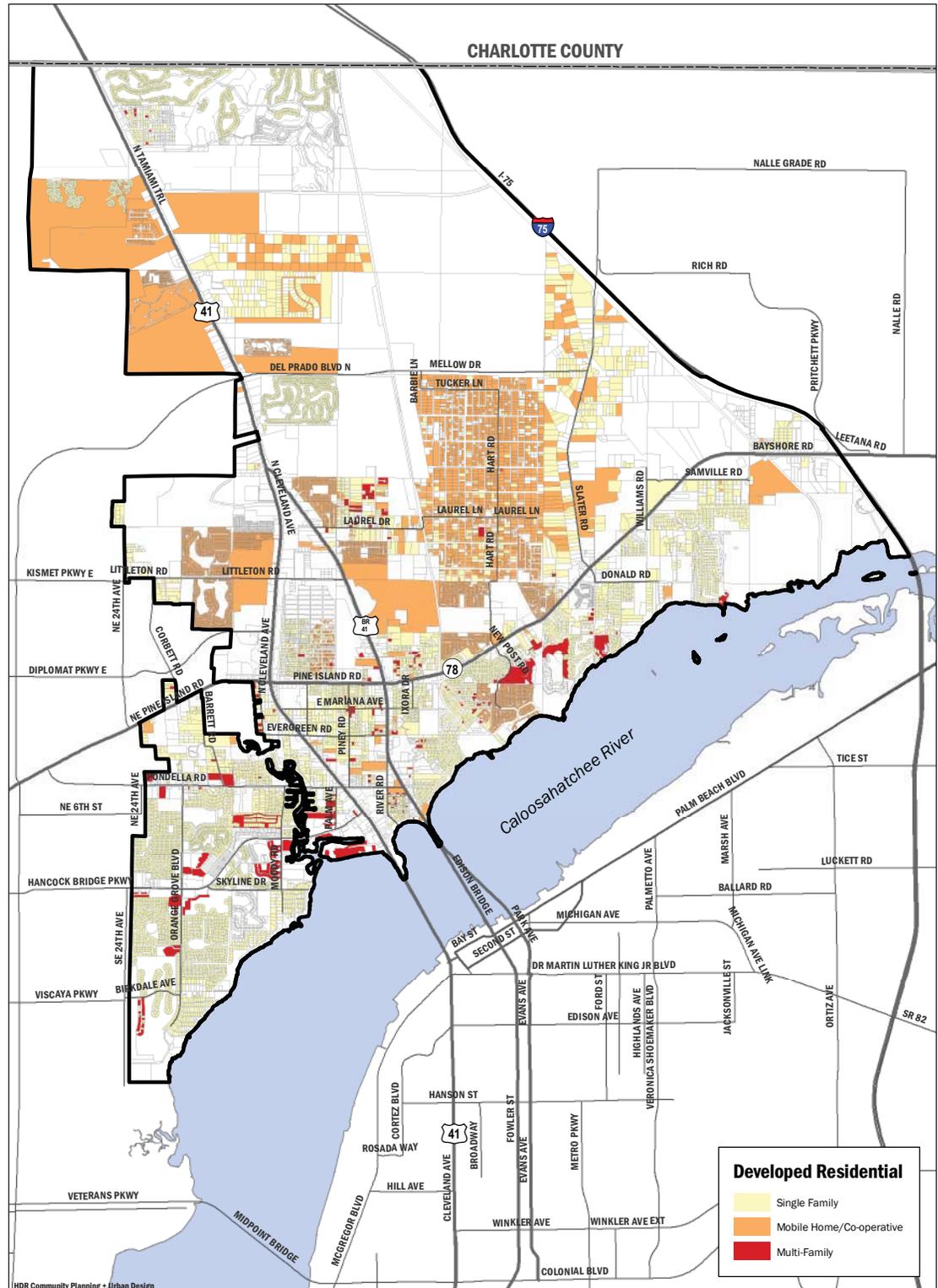
Map 5.
Development Activity

Land that is developed,
undeveloped, or has
approved or pending
development.



Map 6.
Developed Residential

One half of developed residential land in North Fort Myers is mobile home. Forty-six percent is single-family and the remaining four percent is multi-family.



Undeveloped Land with Commercial Zoning

Fifteen percent of the undeveloped land in North Fort Myers, or 716 acres, is zoned for a Commercial use. This figure includes 165 acres of land that has been approved or is pending approval for development. The Commercially zoned undeveloped parcels are located along US 41, US Business 41, Bayshore Road, Pine Island Road, Pondella Road, and Hancock Bridge Parkway. (Map 7) Commercial Zoning in North Fort Myers is shown by acreage and number of parcels in Figure 3.

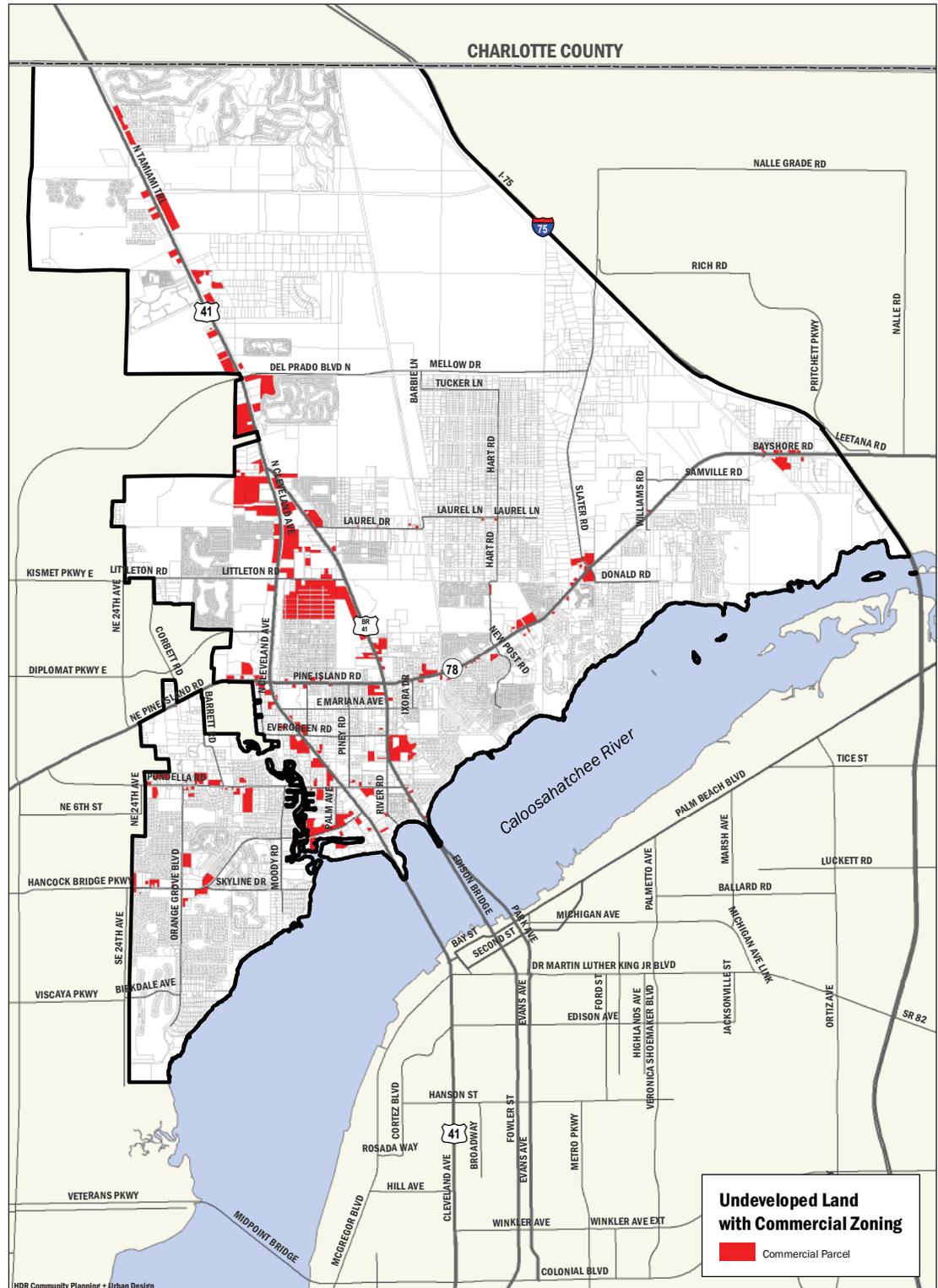
Figure 3. Undeveloped Commercial Land

Zoning	Parcels	Acreage	% of Total
C-1	61	118.3	16.5%
C-1A	81	175.2	24.5%
C-2	56	123.2	17.2%
C-3	2	1.3	0.2%
CC	23	41.6	5.8%
CCCS	2	1.4	0.2%
CF-2	1	1.2	0.2%
CG	13	37.4	5.2%
CN-1	3	5.0	0.7%
CN-2	7	9.2	1.3%
CORR	2	0.2	0.0%
CPD	53	176.9	24.7%
CS	2	2.3	0.3%
CS-1	6	4.8	0.7%
CS-2	1	0.2	0.0%
CT	5	17.7	2.5%
TOTAL	318	715.6	100.0%

Source: Lee County Property Record Database

Map 7.
Undeveloped Commercial
Land

The majority of undeveloped land with commercial zoning is located along US 41, Business 41, Bayshore Road, and Pine Island Road.



Community Facilities & Services

North Fort Myers Planning Area is served by two wastewater franchises; Lee County Utilities (Waterway Estates WWTP) and North Fort Myers Utility, Inc. The Lee County Wastewater System Master Plan Figure 1.2 shows the Existing and Future Extended Service Areas for Lee County Utilities. Lee County Utilities has no plans to expand the Waterway Estates WWTP. The South Florida Water Management District Master Plan for the Regional Irrigation Distribution System for the Lower West Coast Region (Project C-12368) from 2002 shows the existing and future service areas in Lee County, including the Cape Coral and North Fort Myers Wastewater Service Areas.

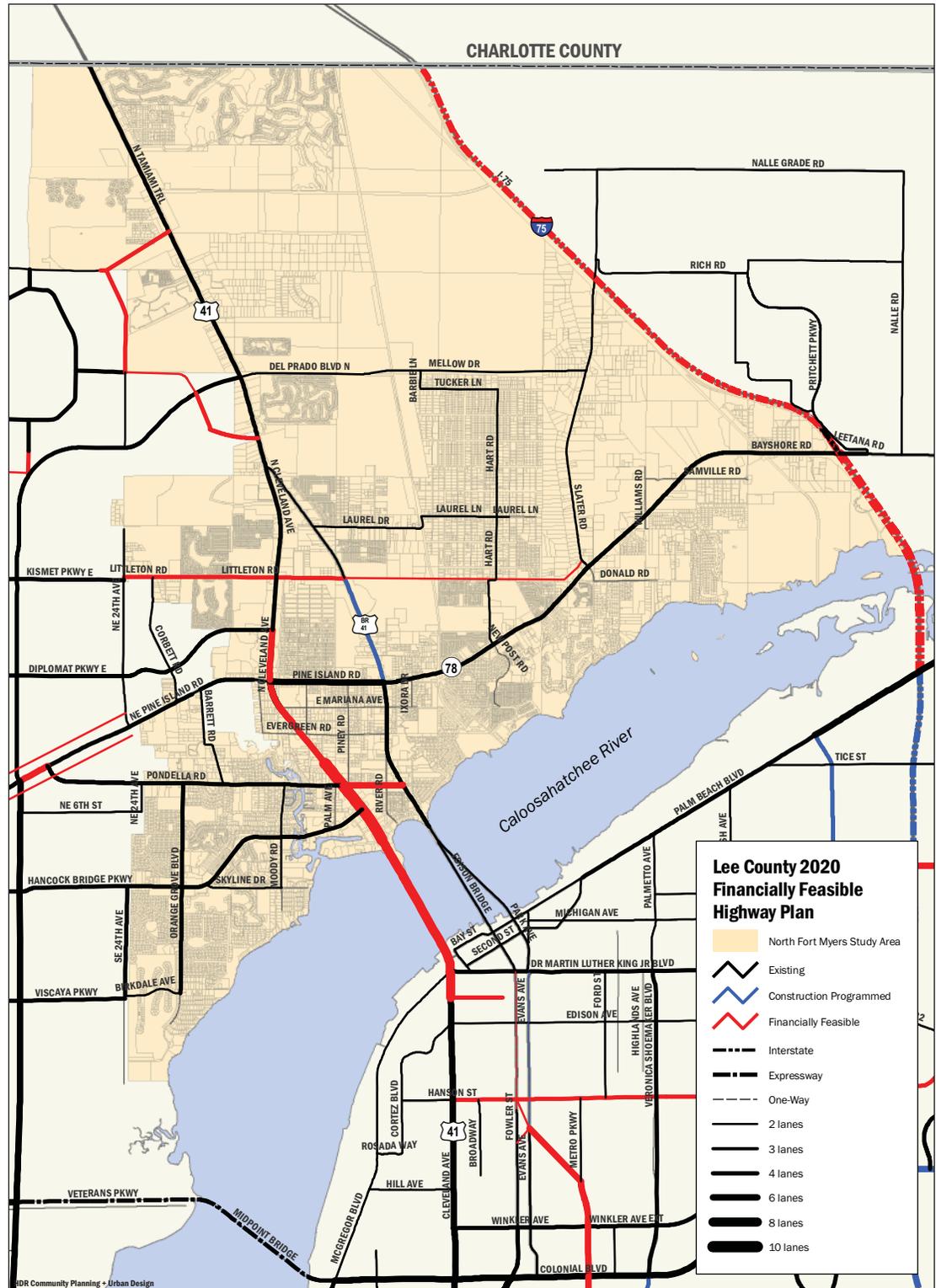
Lee County Utilities is the water provider for most of the North Fort Myers Planning Area. The South Florida Water Management District's 2006 Lower West Coast Water Supply Plan shows the 2005 Existing Service Areas in Figure 5 from Appendix B. Figure 6 from the SFWMD plan shows the areas planned for future service in 2025.

Transportation

The 2020 Financially Feasible Plan was adopted by the Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization on December 8, 2000 and amended on June 20, 2003. Map 8 in this Plan shows the major roadways within the North Fort Myers Community Planning Area and symbolizes them using the 2020 Financially Feasible Plan roadway classification. The roadways are categorized by width, type, and as an Existing, Construction Programmed, or Financially Feasible roadway.

Map 8.
2020 Financially Feasible
Highway Plan.

Major roadways in North Fort
Myers classified according to
Lee County 2020 Financially
Feasible Highway Plan map
found in the Lee Plan.



Parks, Recreation & Conservation

Public Lands

The majority of Public Land, 76 percent or 3,750 acres, within North Fort Myers is conservation land purchased using the Lee County Conservation Land Acquisition and Stewardship Program (Conservation 20/20). The remaining Public Land includes other County-owned land and facilities (6 percent), Federal and state-owned land and facilities (2 percent), municipal-owned land and facilities (less than 1 percent), utilities or right-of-way (10 percent), and public schools (6 percent). See Figure 4 and Map 9 for the location and acreage of public land in North Fort Myers.

Figure 4. Public Land

	Parcels	Acreage	% of Total
County-Owned Land and Facilities	70	309.34	6.2%
Public Schools	9	319.65	6.4%
20/20 Conservation Land	33	3,756.00	75.5%
Utilities and Right of Way	129	508.11	10.2%
Federal and State-Owned Land and Facilities	24	84.68	1.7%
Municipal-Owned Land and Facilities	2	0.05	0.0%
TOTAL	267	4,977.83	100.0%

Source: Lee County Property Record Database

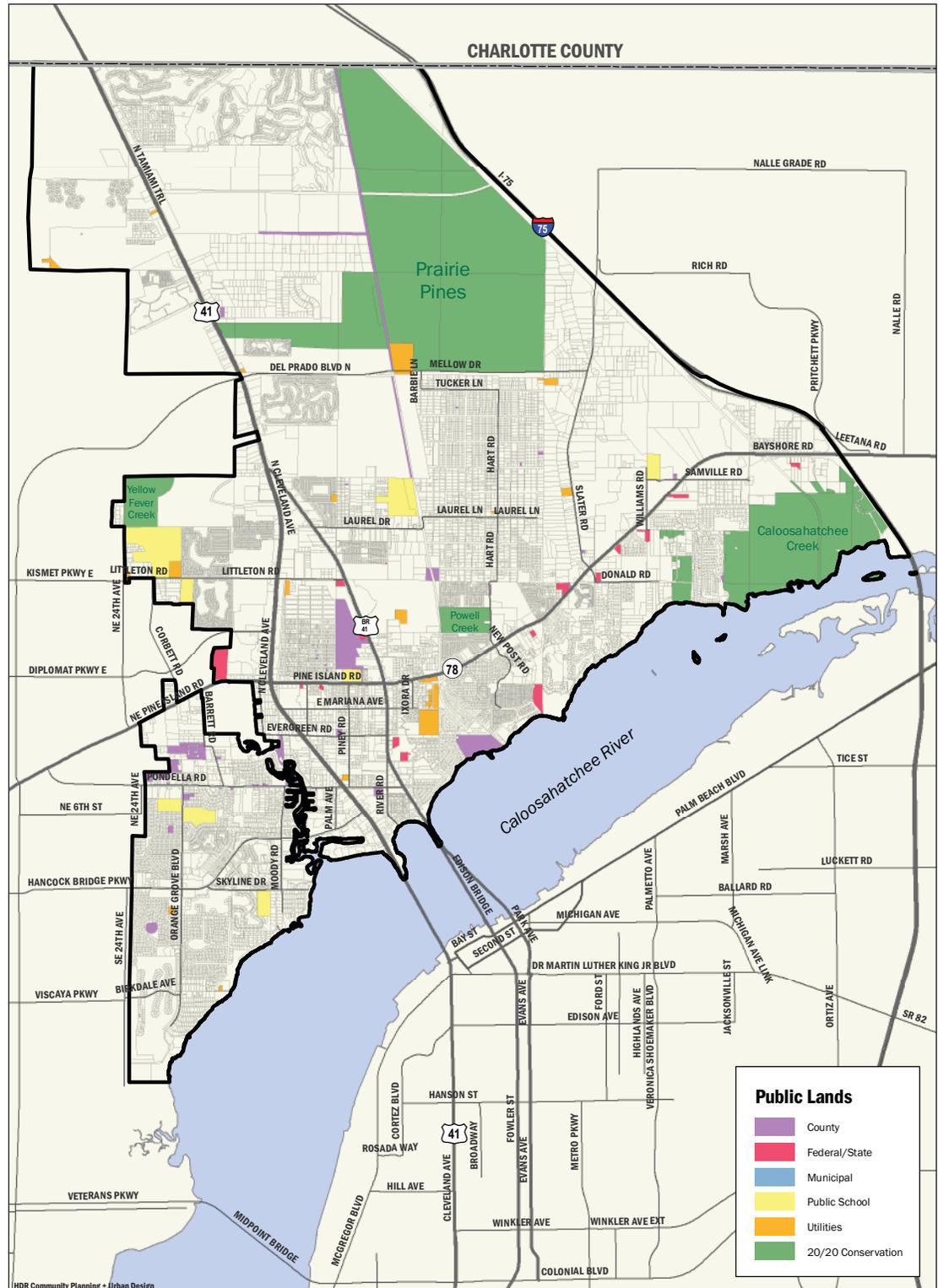
Conservation Land & Trails

As shown in Map 10, the North Fort Myers Planning Area has four large preserves that were purchased using the Lee County Conservation Land Acquisition and Stewardship Program (Conservation 20/20). Two of the four preserves are large, multi-parcel sites that extend outside of the study area: Caloosahatchee Creeks and Yellow Fever Creek. The largest preserve and the smallest preserve, Prairie Pines and Powell Creek, respectively, are located fully within the North Fort Myers Planning Area.

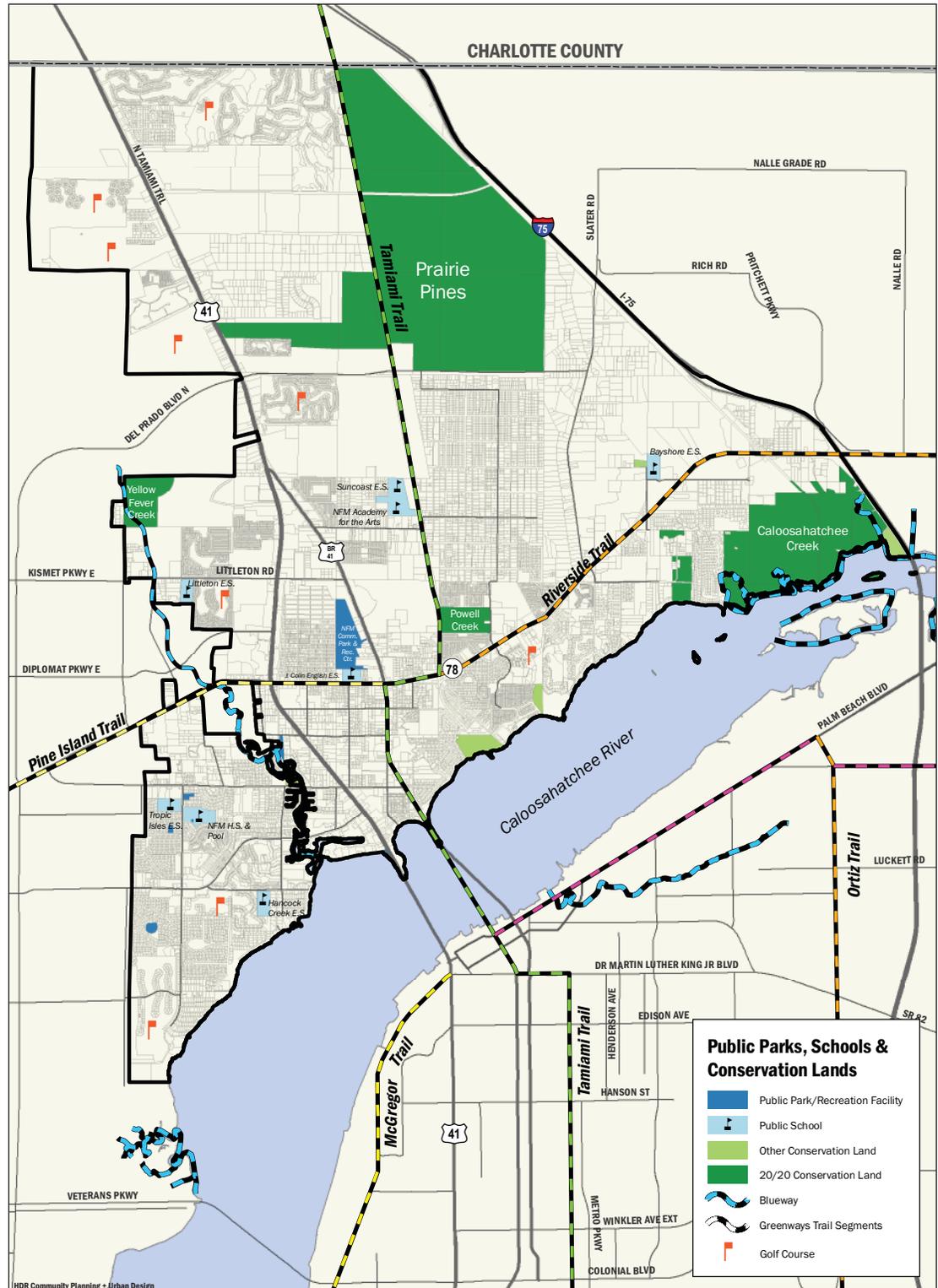
The Caloosahatchee Creeks Preserve is a multi-parcel property that straddles I-75 south of Bayshore Road along the northern shoreline of the Caloosahatchee River. The preserve is situated on 1325-acres with 836-acres within the North Fort Myers Community Planning Area. This acreage includes the 50-acre South Florida Water Management District Recreation Lands located in the center of the preserve along I-75. The Caloosahatchee Creeks Preserve features hiking trails, picnic shelters, observation deck and tower, and a canoe/kayak launch site for the Creeks of CCR Blueway.

The 535-acre Yellow Fever Creek Preserve lies at the headwaters of Yellow Fever Creek south of Del Prado Boulevard. With the Conservation 20/20 Program, Lee County acquired 339-acres of the Preserve in 2001, with 121-acres located within the North Fort Myers Planning Area. The majority of the preserve's public facilities including parking, hiking and equestrian trails, historic farm, camping, dog park, and picnic area will be developed on the City's adjacent 196-acre property.

Map 9.
Public Lands



Map 10.
Public Parks, Schools &
Conservation Lands



The largest preserve in the North Fort Myers Planning Area and in Lee County is the 2,700-acre Prairie Pines Conservation Area. The preserve was acquired between 2001 and 2003 and is located west of I-75 from Del Prado Boulevard/Mellow Drive to Charlotte County. The west edge of the preserve is bordered by an active railroad line. 320-acres of the preserve are west of the rail line extending towards the US 41. Recreation opportunities include hiking, bird-watching, and nature study.

The Powell Creek Conservation Area is located 0.3 miles north of Bayshore Road between Hart Road to the east and the Powell Creek Canal Bypass to the west. The 77-acre preserve was acquired in 2003 and is programmed for hiking trails, bird-watching, and nature photography.

North Fort Myers has three Greenway Trail Segments that are part of the Charlotte-Lee-Hendry and Pine Island-Hendry regional trails; the Tamiami Trail, the Riverside Trail, and the Pine Island Trail. The Tamiami Trail greenway runs north-south along the railroad right-of-way at the western edge of Prairie Pines, past Powell Creek, merges briefly with the east-west greenway at Bayshore Road and passes over the Caloosahatchee River on Edison Bridge. The Pine Island Trail and the Riverside Trail segments run east-west along Bayshore Road and Pine Island Road, and connect North Fort Myers to Cape Coral and the Bayshore community.

The Planning area also has two Blueways; one along the Caloosahatchee River at the Caloosahatchee Creek 20/20 Conservation area; the other runs from the Caloosahatchee River up the Yellow Fever Creek conservation area to the Yellow Fever Creek Preserve. These trails provide public access for recreation and alternative modes of transportation and connect North Fort Myers to the surrounding communities.

Parks & Recreation Facilities

In addition to the amenities found at the 20/20 Conservation areas, North Fort Myers has numerous community parks and recreation facilities that provide a wide range of recreational opportunities. (Map 10) Centrally located, the North Fort Myers Community Park and Recreation Center is the largest public park in the Planning area. Other community parks include: Judd Community Park, Bayshore Community Park, Hancock Park, Waterway Estates Park, Mary S. Moody Neighborhood Park, North Fort Myers Community Pool, and North Fort Myers Community Senior Center. The regional parks in North Fort Myers include the North Shore Park and the Royal Palm Sailing Center.

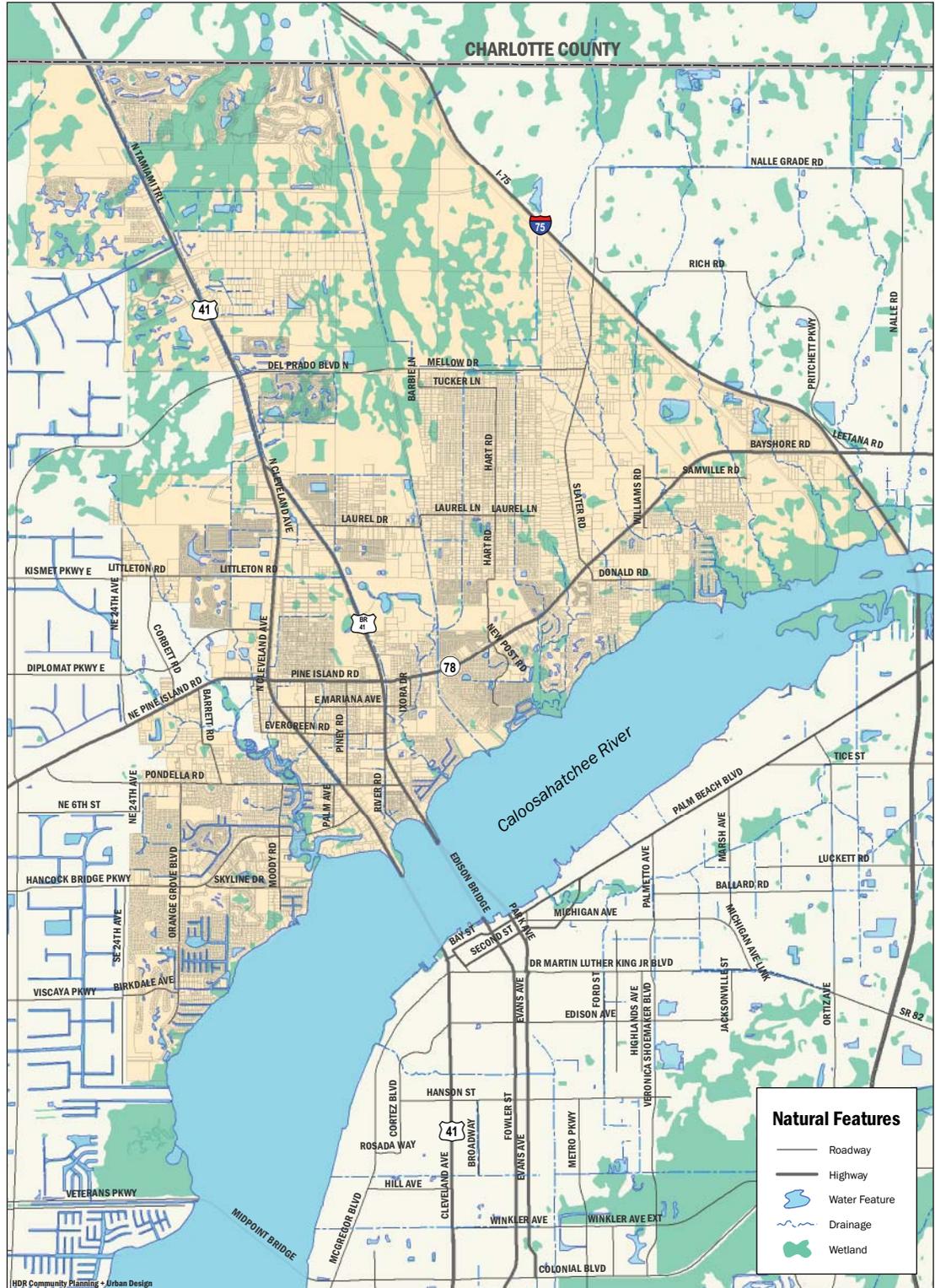
Recreation facilities are also located at many of the public school sites located throughout North Fort Myers. These include Bayshore Elementary, Bayshore Soccer Complex, North Fort Myers Academy for Arts, Tropic Isles Elementary, Robinson Littleton Elementary, Hancock Creek Elementary, J. Colin English Elementary, Suncoast Elementary, and North Fort Myers High School and Pool. In addition to these public facilities, North Fort Myers has nine private golf courses.

Natural Features

Almost 20 percent of the North Fort Myers Planning Area is wetland. Most of these 4,800 acres are located along the Caloosahatchee River, Yellow Fever Creek, and throughout much of the northern half of the Planning Area. The North Fort Myers area drains into the Caloosahatchee River from north to south via canals or streams. (Map 11)

Map 11.
Natural Features

Twenty percent of North Fort Myers is covered with wetlands that drain into the Caloosahatchee River through drainage canals or streams.



4 Community Issues & Opportunities

The North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel identified a number of issues and opportunities affecting development in North Fort Myers. These issues and opportunities, drawn from the Panel's Preliminary Draft report and feedback received during public meetings and workshops, serve as the basis for the Community Plan's goal, objectives, and policies.

Land Use: North Fort Myers & Neighboring Communities

The future of North Fort Myers is strongly influenced by planning and development in surrounding communities, include Charlotte County to the north, the Bayshore Community to the east, the City of Fort Myers to the south, and the City of Cape Coral to the west. While this plan does not directly address planning in areas beyond the boundaries of the North Fort Myers Community, the Panel recognizes the importance of monitoring planning and development activity in neighboring communities and sharing information regarding North Fort Myers programs, initiatives, and development strategies.

To ensure effective information sharing, the Panel encourages the County and appropriate regional and state bodies to maintain open lines of communication regarding pending land use changes, conservation initiatives, annexations, and development approvals that may affect conditions in North Fort Myers. The County should ensure that the Panel's opinions and positions regarding the impacts of proposals such as the Cape Coral's annexation of the Zimmel property, traffic and other impacts associated with the planned development of Babcock Ranch, and a new interchange with I-75 become part of the public dialogue about these and other regionally significant projects.

Land Use: Centers & Corridors

Participants in Community Planning Panel workshops and meetings expressed concern about the quality and character of development in the study area. Cited as factors contributing to stakeholder concerns were the following:

- older, poorly maintained, auto-oriented commercial developments;
- building designs not compatible with or reflective of regional design traditions;
- roadways with minimal landscaping and pedestrian-scaled amenities;
- inadequate accommodations for pedestrians and cyclists;
- loss of native vegetation and degradation of wildlife habitat; and
- the presence of vacant and underutilized commercial properties.

As perceptions of North Fort Myers are strongly influenced by the quality and character of its commercial centers and corridors, the Community Plan provides strategies to improve existing conditions and spark investment in the creation of new regional and local destinations. Through the preparation of sector plans, adoption of new design requirements, and new investment in streetscape and public space improvements, the Plan aims to better position North Fort Myers to attract quality development and reinvestment.

Development Framework

The Community Planning Panel's framework for future commercial and mixed use development, outlined below and reinforced in the balance of the Community Plan, focuses on the following:

- creating new mixed use destinations in the form of compact, pedestrian-friendly Town Centers and Neighborhood Centers;
- improving the character and quality of commercial development along major road corridors; and
- improving community character through the promotion of high quality development that reflects regional design traditions.

A review of plan recommendations of the creation of Town and Neighborhoods Center, the improvement of existing commercial districts, and the character of new development follows. (Map 12)

Town Centers

Through the current planning effort, the CPP identified the following areas as appropriate for designation as Town Centers. For the following areas, the Panel will work with the County and local stakeholders to prepare plans that promote moderate to high intensity, pedestrian-oriented, and mixed use development:

- **North Cleveland Avenue & Hancock Bridge Parkway.** This area is designated for high intensity, mixed use development, including residential mid-to-high rise development on the river and mid-rise mixed use development on North Cleveland Avenue and Hancock Bridge Parkway. The district is planned to include pedestrian-friendly streets, public squares and plazas, a public trail/promenade along the Caloosahatchee River, and conservation sites and trails along Yellow Fever Creek.
- **North Tamiami Trail – Pondella Road to the Caloosahatchee River.** This area is designated for high intensity, mixed use development including mid-to-high rise development overlooking the river and low-to-mid-rise, mixed use redevelopment and adaptive reuse along Old Tamiami Trail north to the commercial properties at the intersection of Old Tamiami Trail and Pondella Road.
- **Bayshore & I-75.** This area is designated for moderate intensity, mixed use development with a mix of retail, professional and personal services, and a variety of housing types. The district is planned to include a minimum amount of residential uses, preserve natural areas and stream/wildlife movement corridors with transitions in the scale and intensity of development to ensure compatibility with existing residential development.

For each of these areas, the Community Planning Panel will work with the County to prepare sector plans, development regulations (zoning overlay districts and design standards), and implementation plans to ensure development is consistent with the community's vision. (Maps 13, 14, 15) The sector plans, development regulations, and implementation plans should incorporate the following general principles of smart growth and new urbanism:

- compact development and a mix of uses are encouraged to promote walking; allow for shared parking; support transit; and minimize disturbance of natural areas, wildlife corridors, and drainage ways;
- buildings should be designed to frame the public realm, enliven streetscapes, and provide for the informal surveillance of public spaces, primary entries, windows, storefronts, porches, and stoops should open onto streets, sidewalks, and public spaces;
- parks, squares, plazas, and promenades should be designed to promote community life and provide a variety of outdoor public space for informal gatherings, public events, and community activities;
- to dispense traffic, promote walking, and provide convenient routes for vehicles and pedestrians, streets should be designed in interconnected networks with generous sidewalks, shade trees, well-marked crossings, and amenities like pedestrian-scaled lighting, benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, and transit shelters; and
- parking areas (except for on-street spaces), loading docks, and service entries should be screened from public view and accessed from alleys, service courts, and side streets.

Implementation of the Town Center concept will require the development and adoption of provisions allowing greater minimum, maximum base, and maximum total densities and building heights than are currently allowed under the Lee Plan. Such changes in the Lee Plan should be considered only after the completion and adoption of a sector plan addressing land use, development intensity, and the adequacy of public facilities.

Neighborhood Centers

In addition to the Town Center designations, the Community Planning Panel has identified the following areas as Neighborhood Centers appropriate for moderate intensity, pedestrian-oriented, mixed use development:

- US 41 & Nalle Grade Road;
- US 41 & Del Prado Boulevard;
- US 41 & US Business 41 (including the Shell Factory property);
- US 41 & Pine Island Road;
- US Business 41 & Bayshore Road;
- Hancock Bridge Parkway & Orange Grove Boulevard;
- Bayshore Road & Slater Road; and
- Bayshore Road & Hart Road.

For these areas, the community favors neighborhood-serving mixed use developments; pedestrian-friendly street, site, and building designs; the incorporation of live/work, multi-family, and attached housing; and sidewalk and path connections to nearby neighborhoods, parks, and public uses. The Neighborhood Center designations are intended to replace the designations shown on the Commercial Site Location Standards Map in the Lee Plan Map 19.

Map 13.
Town Centers - US 41 &
Hancock Bridge Parkway
and US Business 41
from Pondella Road to
Caloosahatchee Creek



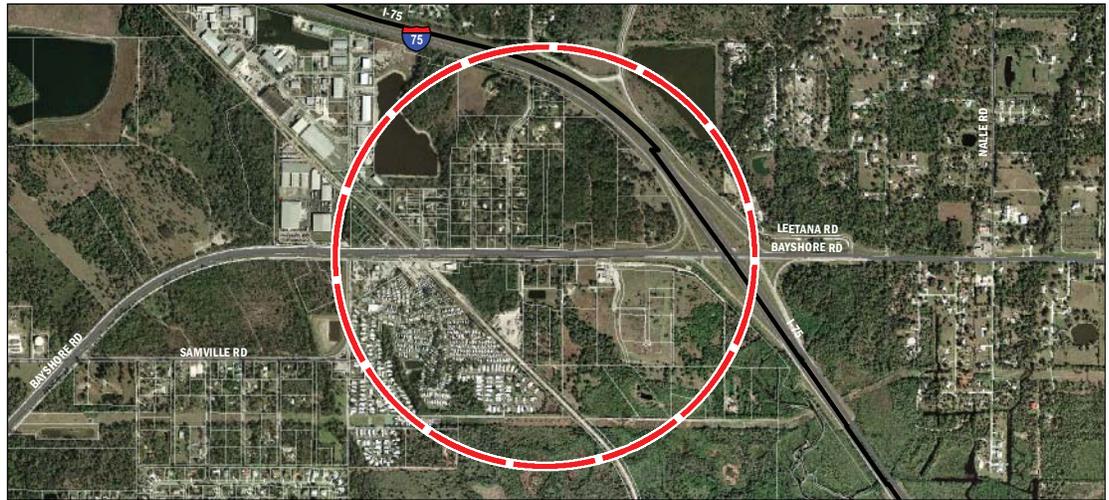
Undeveloped parcels in the
Town Centers



Commercial zoning in the
Town Centers.



Map 14.
Town Center – Bayshore
Road & I-75



Undeveloped parcels in the
Town Centers

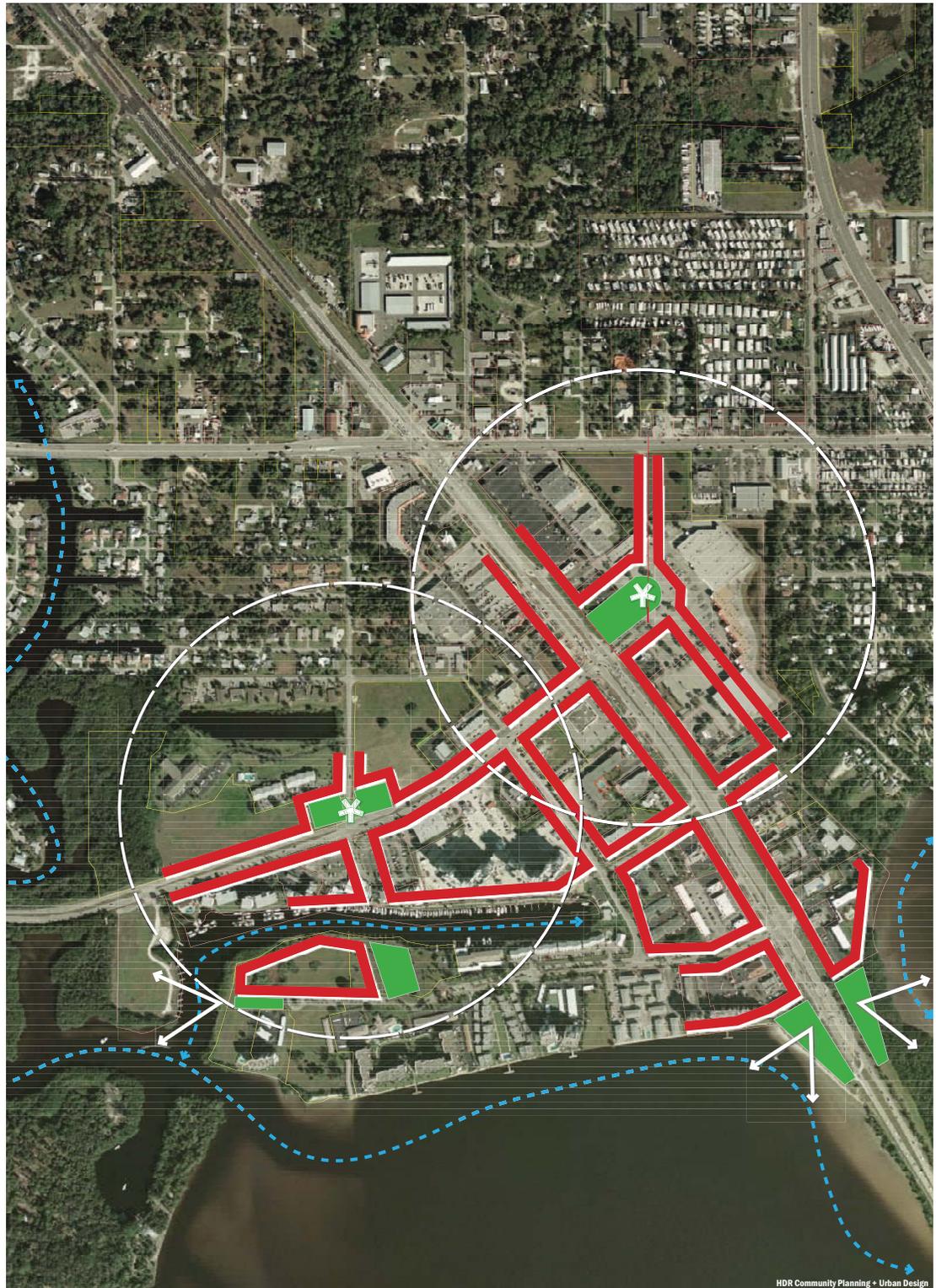


Commercial zoning in the
Town Centers.



Map 15.
Town Center Sketch Plan

Sketch showing opportunities for public space, open space connections, and pedestrian-friendly streets at US 41 & Hancock Bridge Parkway Town Center.



To guide development and redevelopment of sites in these areas (Map 16), the Panel will work with the County to prepare a Neighborhood Center Overlay District providing for the following:

- permitted and prohibited uses;
- standards for building, site, landscape, and sign design;
- standards for pedestrian and bicycle facilities;
- building setbacks and build-to lines;
- conservation of natural features and native vegetation;
- requirements for shared access and side/rear yard parking;
- incentives (e.g. regulatory relief, increased height and density, etc.) for the redevelopment of obsolete and poorly performing commercial centers; and
- incentives for projects incorporating mixed uses, public amenities, and affordable housing.

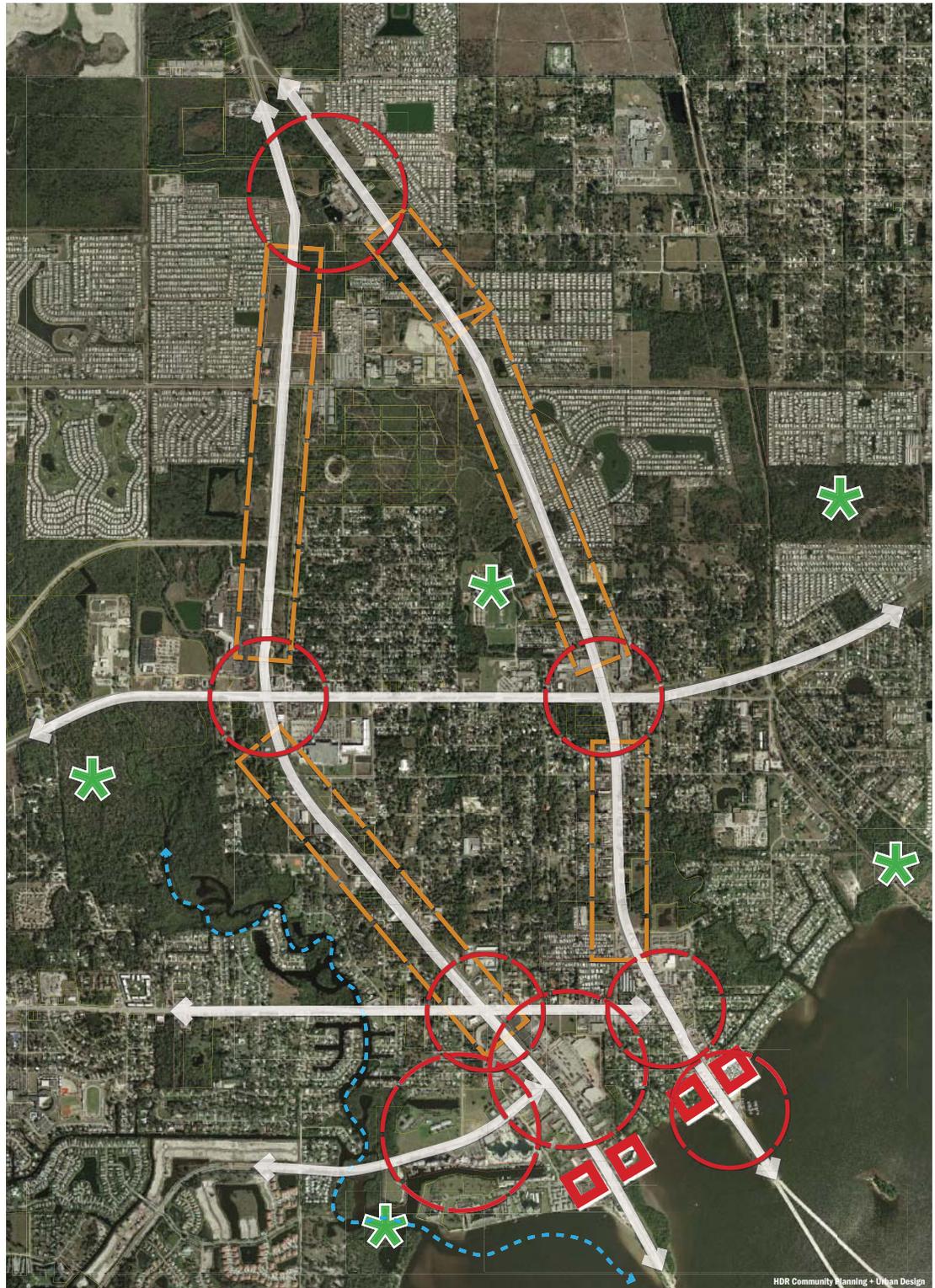
Commercial Corridors

Improving conditions along North Fort Myers's commercial corridors is a high priority of the Community Planning Panel. Older, auto-oriented commercial strips lining major roadways are perceived by the community as unattractive and inconsistent with their vision for the future. Stakeholders expressed a clear interest in development with the following characteristics:

- building forms and designs compatible with and reflective of the region's traditional architecture;
- enhanced landscape designs with priority given to the preservation of existing mature trees, stream corridors, and native vegetation;
- streetscape and sidewalk amenities providing for pedestrian movement, shade, seating, and lighting;
- parking in side and rear yard locations and generally screened from public view;
- effective screening of utility infrastructure and service/loading areas;
- transitions in building form and scale to ensure compatibility with existing development; and
- pedestrian and vehicular connections between neighboring destinations.

It's especially important that the Community Planning Panel and County quickly focus on improving the form and character of development along North Fort Myers's commercial corridors. Several older commercial properties—including currently vacant stores and strip shopping centers—are ripe for redevelopment and several vacant, commercially-zoned sites at key intersection are being marketed for development. Adopting new, more stringent standards for new development and redevelopment will help ensure projects contribute to North Fort Myers's identity as an attractive, economically vital, and livable community. (Map 16)

Map 16.
Commercial Corridors
Commercial Corridors along
US Route 41 and Business
Route 41.



To guide development and redevelopment along North Fort Myers's commercial corridors, the Panel will work with the County to prepare a Corridor Overlay District as part of the Land Development Code requiring enhanced landscaping, greater buffering and shading of parking areas, improved commercial signage, enhanced standards to ensure architectural quality and compatibility, and incentives for quality development. At minimum, the Corridor Overlay District will provide the following:

- permitted and prohibited uses;
- standards for building, site, landscape, and sign design;
- standards for pedestrian and bicycle facilities;
- building setbacks and build-to-lines;
- conservation of natural features and native vegetation;
- buffers to adjacent residential neighborhoods;
- requirements for shared access and side/rear yard parking;
- incentives (e.g. regulatory relief, increased density, etc.) for the redevelopment of obsolete and poorly performing commercial centers;
- incentives for projects incorporating mixed uses, public amenities, and affordable housing; and
- shared parking.

Medical District Feasibility

Through research and consultation with local health care providers, the Community Planning Panel's Health and Human Services subcommittee identified the absence of health care facilities as a critical issue. According to subcommittee reports, there is unmet demand for new medical facilities—clinics, urgent care centers, ambulatory surgery centers, diagnostic facilities, lab services, and other health care facilities—north of the Caloosahatchee River.

To further explore the potential for the creation of a Medical District of Corridor in North Fort Myers, the Panel will work with the Department of Community Development, Horizon Council, Human Services Department, Lee County Health Department, Medical Society, and Lee Memorial Health Systems to procure funding and complete a detailed analysis for the feasibility of developing a new hospital, 24/7 urgent care facility, ambulatory surgery center, physician specialty offices, and related medical diagnostic and lab services in the northeast area of North Fort Myers. The analysis will provide the following:

- a preliminary development program indicating the types, sizes, and phasing of buildings and site improvements;
- an evaluation of sites with the potential to support the preliminary development program including an evaluation of infrastructure capacity;
- a market assessment and financing plan to assess project feasibility by private and public sectors;
- recommended planning policy and regulatory changes required to support a preferred development strategy;
- a preliminary development timeline and estimate of timeline for achieving necessary entitlements; and
- identify other or associated uses within the Medical Corridor.

Land Use: Neighborhoods & Housing

The Community Planning Panel identified the conservation and improvement of existing neighborhoods and the provision of safe, affordable, and attractive housing as primary objectives of the plan. Members of the panel and participants in planning workshops emphasized the need to define policies and initiative to accomplish the following:

- stabilize and improve older neighborhoods;
- ensure newer neighborhoods maintain their value and livability;
- conserve the rural character of existing low density neighborhoods;
- attract new, high quality development in new neighborhoods, mixed use centers, and on infill sites in existing neighborhoods;
- provide a range of housing types and price points to meet the full range of community needs; and
- ensure new residential development complements and is compatible with its built and natural surroundings.

The Community Planning Panel raised specific concerns about existing concentrations of low value housing in North Fort Myers. An analysis of tax assessor records indicates that 77% of North Fort Myers residential parcels (single family and mobile homes) are assessed at or below the County median just market value of \$224,000. (The median value of residential parcels in North Fort Myers is approximately \$100,000 less than the County median value.) (Map 17) To address this concern, the Community Planning Panel favors policies and programs that encourage projects that include a mix of housing types and values and avoid the concentration of low income households in isolated locations.

A review of specific issues and opportunities follows.

Residential Densities

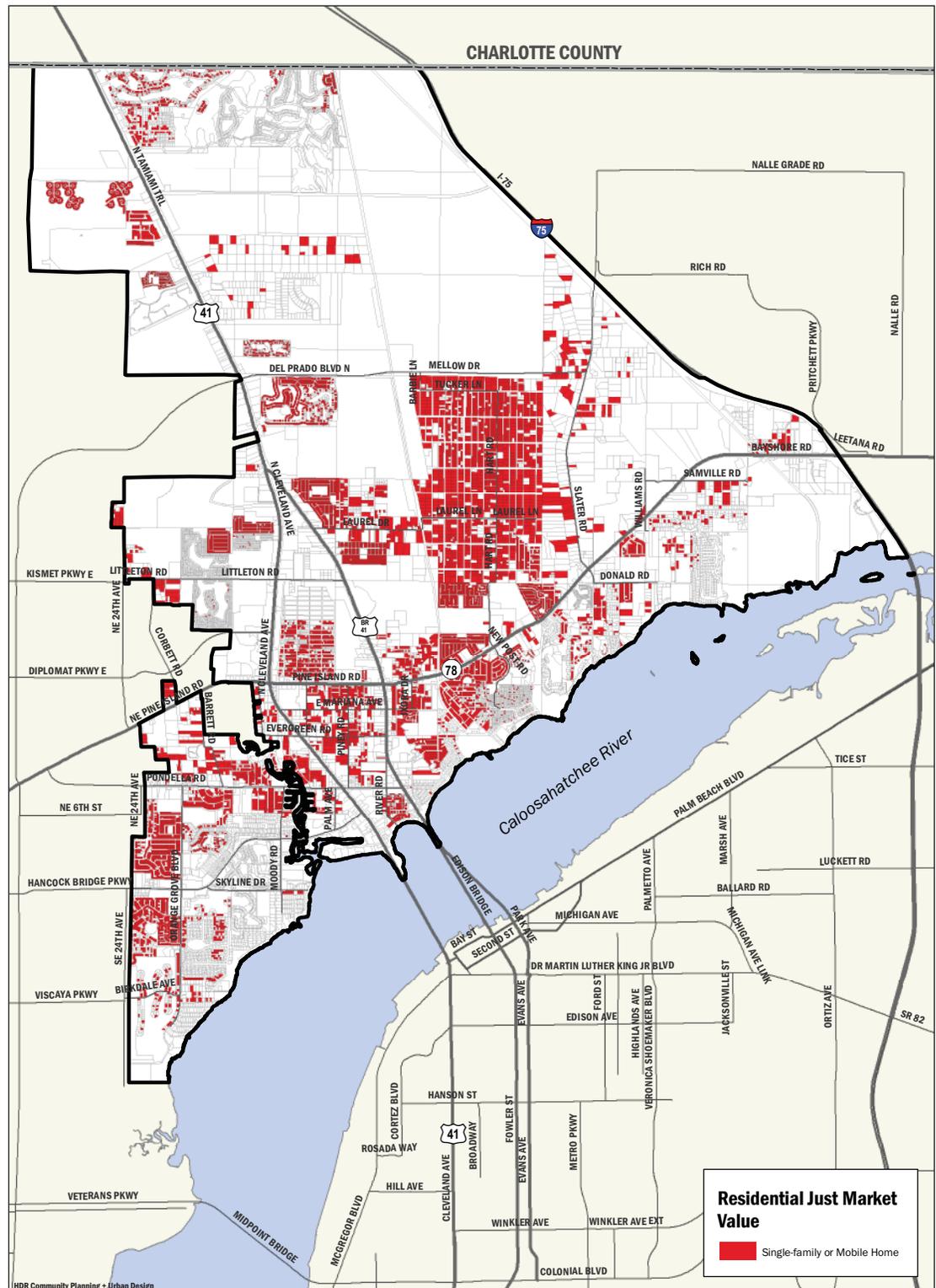
Overall, the Community Planning Panel favors maintaining the current pattern and planned densities for residential development defined in the Lee Plan. The Community Planning Panel supports residential density increases in a few locations, including areas designated for Town Center and Village Center development, consistent with policies and guidelines for the creation of compact, walkable communities. The Community Planning Panel also support increases in densities for projects that provide affordable, work force and senior housing, so long as specific standards of quality and compatibility are met.

Neighborhood Conservation

The conservation and improvement of existing neighborhoods is a central concern of the Community Planning Panel. With the majority of housing units (single family and mobile homes) in the study area built before 1980, issues associated with property maintenance, market obsolescence, code compliance, and insurability are increasingly important to community stakeholders. With weakening regional job and housing markets and increasing vacancy rates, conditions in neighborhoods with older housing will require support to ensure long term viability. Continued public investment in infrastructure, conservation, parks and schools, transit, and

Map 17. Residential Just Market Value

Single-family and mobile home residential property with just market values below the County median.



community development is critical to bolster the livability and competitive position of North Fort Myers's existing neighborhoods.

To address conditions in older neighborhoods, the Community Planning Panel supports and encourages efforts to stabilize and improve existing neighborhoods, including the County's recently expanded code enforcement initiative and the on-going implementation of Neighborhood District Revitalization Plans for Palmona Park and Suncoast Estates. With the recent softening of the housing market, these efforts will help maintain values in existing neighborhoods and quicken their recovery as the market improves.

Housing Opportunities

The Community Planning Panel recognizes the importance of providing for a wide range of housing needs and encourages the development of North Fort Myers's fair share of low income, workforce, affordable, and senior housing. Working with the County and not-for-profit housing providers, the Community Planning Panel will assist in the identification of sites suitable for low income, workforce, affordable, and senior housing, assist in the county's on-going effort to remove regulatory barriers to affordability, and work with housing stakeholder to improve and expand existing incentive programs.

The Community Planning Panel also favors implementation of Smart Growth strategies encouraging the development of affordable and workforce housing as infill development in existing neighborhoods and as integral parts of new walkable, mixed use communities. To promote such development, the Panel will participate in initiatives to identify candidate sites for affordable housing and prepare preliminary studies for potential pilot or demonstration projects. The evaluation should focus on sites with the following general characteristics:

- located within areas designated as Town Centers or Village Centers in this Plan;
- located in areas designated for Intensive Development, Central Urban, and Urban Community on the current Lee Plan's Future Land Use Map;
- located where central water/sewer service is available;
- located within comfortable walking distance of mass transit, commercial and personal services, and parks and recreation facilities; and
- located on land previously converted for urban purposes.

Transportation

Regional accessibility is among the community's most powerful assets—North Fort Myers's position at the crossroads of several major transportation corridors offers unique advantages, supporting markets for investment and reinvestment and providing easy access to regional destinations, employment centers, and amenities. The Panel also recognizes challenges associated with such high levels of regional connectivity. Managing increasing congestion at the bridge crossings and providing better east-west connections will become increasingly important as the growth of neighboring communities continues, downtown Fort Myers' redevelopment efforts accelerate, and the I-75 corridor south of the river attracts high-employment generating uses.

To address the community's transportation challenges, the Plan focuses on the following broad objectives:

- providing convenient access to areas designated for Town and Neighborhood Center development;
- balancing the need to serve regional traffic while minimizing negative effects on natural areas, neighborhoods, and business districts;
- ensuring transportation investments contribute to improving the visual character of the community; and
- reducing vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled by promoting alternatives to travel by single-occupant vehicles; and
- providing for the needs of transit dependent residents, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

A review of specific issues and opportunities follows.

Future Capacity & Connectivity Improvements

With major improvements recently completed along US Business 41, Bayshore Road, and Del Pardo Boulevard west of US 41, attention will shift to other critical segments of the transportation network, including potential capacity and connectivity improvements to local collectors and arterials. Decisions regarding the functional classification and future improvements or extension of North Fort Myers roadways, including Littleton Road, Hancock Bridge Parkway, Hart Road, Slater Road, and others not currently shown on the Future Functional Classification Map (Map 3B) in the Lee Plan should be based on a careful analysis of need, community and environmental impact, and the potential for incorporation of context-sensitive design treatments. Public participation in planning and design processes for these and other road improvements should provide opportunities for involvement of the Panel and other North Fort Myers stakeholders.

I-75 Interchange

Concepts for an additional interchange on I-75 north of the Slater Road crossing have been discussed for the past 20 years but no detailed needs assessment or preliminary design studies have been completed. While a new interchange at this location could significantly impact the North Fort Myers community and trigger a re-evaluation of planning for large sections of the study area, it is not currently possible to conduct an assessment of impacts or prepare planning recommendations. Consequently, the Community Planning Panel encourages the County and FDOT to conduct a detailed analysis of a new interchange and address community questions regarding impacts to existing neighborhoods, local streets, and conservation lands.

Road & Right-of-Way Design

The design quality of public roads and rights-of-way strongly influences the community's character and livability. Streets designed with generous sidewalks, attractive landscaping, median and gateway plantings, accessible crosswalks, pedestrian lighting, bike trails, and trees improve connectivity as well bolster the community's reputation as good place to live and do business.

Recognizing the important role of street design in shaping quality of life, the Community Planning Panel encourages the County to develop alternative design standards for arterials and collectors, especially for roadway segments serving areas designated as Town Centers and Neighborhood Centers. Such standards may draw on guidance from the Institute for Traffic Engineers Proposed Recommended Practice, Contest Sensitive Solutions for Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities. The Panel also will work with the Lee County Roadway Landscape Advisory Committee to complete plans for streetscape and landscape improvements in gateway locations and along major roadways consistent with the general provisions of the LeeScape Master Plan, including Bayshore and Pine Island Roads, North Cleveland Avenue, North Tamiami Trail, Pondella Road, Hancock Bridge Parkway, and Del Prado Boulevard. Before finalization, plans should be presented for review to the North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel.

Transit Service

The Community Planning Panel encourages the County and Lee Trans to continue to explore opportunities to reduce traffic congestion, especially morning peak hour congestion at the bridge crossings, and improve accessibility for transit dependent populations through the improvement of transit service in North Fort Myers. The Panel will work with Lee Trans to assess current service and explore potential service adjustments, modifications, and expansions.

Community Facilities & Services

The Community Planning Panel seeks to ensure the continued delivery of high quality community facilities and services to meet the educational, recreational, informational, and public safety, health, and welfare needs of residents, visitors, and stakeholders of North Fort Myers. County objectives and policies in Chapter IV of the Lee Plan regarding the provisions of community facilities and services, including those addressing adequate levels of service and extension of service, will be maintained and evaluated for effectiveness on an on-going basis. The Panel encourages the County to report proposed policy changes affecting existing or planned facilities and services in North Fort Myers, including changes in the scope or timing of planned capital improvements, and address community concerns prior to taking formal action.

Water & Waste Water Utilities

During the current planning effort, members of the Community Planning Panel's Infrastructure Committee initiated a dialogue with utility providers in the area and began to explore issues related to the definition of service areas, service extensions, treatment capacity, and facility plans. Based on these discussions and a review of published reports, there appears to be sufficient capacity to support existing and planned development under the land use provisions of the current Lee Plan but further analysis is required to determine the adequacy of existing facilities to support increased densities in areas designated for Town Centers and Neighborhood Centers. As it is likely capacity increases will be required to support planned redevelopment in areas designated for Town Centers, additional analysis will be required to determine potential demand and related need for facility extensions and improvements.

Septic System Monitoring

Participants in public meetings and workshops expressed concerns about the performance and safety of existing septic systems in areas without sanitary sewer service. Participants raised specific concerns about inadequately maintained and failing septic systems as well as concerns about the effects such systems may have on public health and surface water quality. To verify these reports and define potential solutions, the Panel encourages the County to expand existing inspection and monitoring programs and provide periodic reports to North Fort Myers stakeholders. Should further analysis confirm community suspicions regarding the extent the problem, the Panel encourages the County to accelerate plans for the extension of sanitary sewer service to unserved areas of North Fort Myers.

Water Conservation

Participants in workshop and public meetings expressed strong support for more aggressive and comprehensive efforts to conserve water resources. Through public educational campaigns, the County and the Southwest Florida Water Management District, should more aggressively encourage water conservation and the expansion of reuse programs to include both commercial and residential properties.

Public Works Project Enhancements

As with public investments in roadways, parks, and other public facilities, the Panel encourages the County to explore opportunities for landscape and aesthetic enhancements as part of planned capital improvement projects.

Public Education

The Panel recognizes the need for increased public education regarding existing utility services, especially water and waste water facilities, and will support planned educational efforts sponsored by the Department of Public Works, the Lee County Water Supply Authority, and the South Florida Water Management District.

Parks, Recreation & Conservation

Community Planning Panel members and participants in public workshops expressed strong support for planning strategies designed to protect and conserve natural resources, expand recreation opportunities, and provide a broad mix of park and recreation facilities. North Fort Myers's parks, conservation lands, and remaining natural areas are important assets which, with additional investment and promotion, can become important tools to support community livability, sustainability, and economic vitality. Recent initiatives like Conservation 20/20 and the Greenways planning effort are expected to bring significant changes to the community in the next decade—significant natural areas will be protected, public access to the Caloosahatchee River and key tributaries will be improved, and new recreational and educational opportunities will be available for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.

Needs Assessment & Standards

Community Planning Panel members expressed concern about the general nature of Lee Plan policies and standards for park and recreation facilities serving North Fort Myers. To better understand community needs and establish reasonable minimum levels of service for parks and recreation facilities and services in North Fort Myers, the Panel encourages the County to conduct additional research regarding community needs and desires for park space and recreational facilities and services, and re-evaluate the Lee Plan non-regulatory, desired level of service standards for community parks and generalized service area boundaries.

North Ft Myers Community Park Improvements

Future planning for the North Fort Myers Community Park was a topic of special interest to members of the Panel. Specifically, Panel members believe the park should be designed to act as a hub, connected to other open space/recreational opportunities through pedestrian and bicycle linkages, either along public rights-of-way or through adjacent developments. To ensure the park's development occurs consistent with community desires, the Panel, North Fort Myers stakeholders, and owners of surrounding properties should have opportunities to work directly with the Park's programmers and designers.

Greenway & Blueway Development

The Community Planning Panel encourages the County to designate as priorities the following improvements identified in the Lee County Trails Master Plan:

- the Tamiami Trail Greenway
- the Calloosahatchee River Blueway (Water Trail); and
- the Yellow Fever Creek Blueway (Water Trail).

With proper planning, these projects can provide important conservation and recreation benefits to North Fort Myers residents and visitors.

Habitat Conservation & Wildlife Movement

Community Planning Panel members expressed concern about the loss of natural habitat and native vegetation, especially in areas of North Fort Myers experiencing development. Panel members cited the fragmentation of habitat, the discontinuity of wildlife movement corridors, and the effectiveness of existing inspection and mitigation programs as key concerns.

To address these and related concerns about the loss of native vegetation in developments along Bayshore Road, the Panel encourages the County and its partners in natural resource conservation to expand efforts to protect wildlife habitat, including stands of native vegetation and undisturbed vegetative and drainage corridors, and focus resources on the management of existing conservation sites and the purchase and protection of properties along key wildlife movement corridors.

The Panel will work with the County to explore the following:

- requiring development proposals adjacent to the Caloosahatchee River and its tributaries to include floodplain protection plans prior to zoning approval;
- requiring that off-site mitigation of impacts to indigenous areas, wetlands, or wildlife habitat for development in North Fort Myers will occur within North Fort Myers;
- encouraging community participation in County water quality programs developed to address required Total Maximum Daily Loads; and
- establishing new initiatives for the protection of wildlife movement corridors to include the review of development to provide for interconnections of conservation easements;
- finalizing and refining of stewardship and management's plans for the Prairie Pines, Caloosahatchee Creeks, Yellow Fever Creek and Powell Creek Preserves; and
- supporting the identification of additional sites and corridors for acquisition under the Conservation 20/20 program, including sites along planned trails, wildlife corridors, greenways, and major creeks; and
- exploring the feasibility of establishing a small site conservation program to transfer land acquisitions or conservation easement to link larger park and preserves, mitigation areas; protect native trees and vegetation, creeks, wetland systems, and wildlife movement corridors; and provide connections to greenways and blueways.

5 Goal, Objectives & Policies

Introduction

The following draft goal, objectives, and policies are offered for review by the North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel. This draft, based on previous work by the Community Planning Panel as documented in the Preliminary Draft of the North Fort Myers Community Vision Statement, includes a comprehensive set of recommendations for community conservation, renewal, and improvement.

Policy recommendations are designed to achieve the following broad planning, development, and conservation objectives:

- Protect and enhance the community's unique assets – diverse neighborhoods, excellent accessibility, regionally-significant natural preserves, planned greenways and blueways, and extensive river and creek frontage;
- Leverage locational advantages and access to regional transportation infrastructure- Interstate 75, Tamiami Trail, the river bridges, and planned network of local and regional roadways;
- Demonstrate the benefits of compact, mixed use development by focusing public and private investment in three new Town Centers and encouraging the development of neighborhood serving projects in a series of smaller-scale Neighborhood Centers; and
- Reposition underutilized and obsolescent projects as new destination for investment.

Upon the Panel's review and approval, the goal, objectives, and policies will be refined and transmitted to the County for consideration as part of the upcoming cycle of proposed amendments to the Lee Plan.

Structure of Recommendations

Recommended policies are organized around the following list of topics:

- Land Use: Neighborhoods & Housing
- Land Use: Centers & Corridors
- Transportation
- Community Facilities & Services
- Parks, Recreation & Conservation
- Public Participation

Policies aimed at improving development quality and character – a primary part of the community's vision – are addressed throughout the draft rather than under a single objective.

Specifically, policies addressing the need for new design standards in Land Development Code are included under Centers and Corridors; and policies addressing roadway landscaping and gateway treatments are included under Transportation.

Key Initiatives

The recommendations define several follow-on initiatives to advance the community's vision. The initiatives include the following:

- Preparation of sector plans for the three areas designated as Town Centers;
- Preparation of overlay zones for Town Centers, Neighborhood Centers, and Corridors;
- A study to assess the feasibility of establishing a Medical Districts;
- The development of “fair share” projections of affordable housing need and the identification of candidate sites for affordable housing pilot projects;
- The evaluation of sites for acquisition in future phases of the Conservation 20/20 program;
- The completion of transportation and land use plans for a new I-75 interchange and the eastward extension of Hancock Bridge Parkway.

Draft Goals, Objectives & Policies

GOAL: NORTH FORT MYERS. North Fort Myers seeks to improve the community's livability and economic vitality by and promoting compact, mixed use development in the form of new town and neighborhood centers; attracting appropriate investment to revitalize older neighborhoods and commercial corridors, stabilizing and ~~conserving~~ enhancing, existing neighborhoods; preserving natural resources; and providing greater opportunities for public participation in the land development approval process.

Motion made by Wayne Daltry, 2nd by Jared Beck motion carried unanimously

OBJECTIVE 1.0: LAND USE: NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING. ~~To ensure the community's long-term livability and economic viability, Lee County policies, programs, and capital investments must recognize the unique challenges facing North Fort Myers's residential neighborhoods and provide on-going support for their conservation, stabilization, and compatible infill development. The count will encourage the development of North Fort Myers's fair share of low-income, workforce-affordable, and senior housing in new neighborhoods, infill sites in existing neighborhoods, and as integral parts of new mixed-use developments. By 2012 Land Use and Housing Review will be completed by neighborhood and corridor.~~

Motion made by Tom Hoolihan and 2nd by Jared Beck motion carried unanimously

Policy 1.1: Code Enforcement. Support the continuation and expansion of the code enforcement initiatives of Lee County Code Enforcement and Department of Human Services targeting North Fort Myers neighborhoods with high incidences of violations. The County will provide periodic reports of enforcement activities to the North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel.

Policy 1.2: Neighborhood District Planning. The North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel will continue working with the Department of Human Services to implement the Neighborhood District Revitalization Plans. ~~for Palmona Park and Suncoast Estates.~~

Motion made by Wayne Daltry 2nd by Jared Beck motion passed unanimously

Policy 1.3: Housing Maintenance & Repair. The North Fort Myers Community Panel will work with the County to explore opportunities to expand Department of Human Service programs designed to help maintain, repair, and improve existing owner-occupied housing.

Policy 1.4 Small Scale Mixed Use Projections. To increase the diversity of housing types available for residents, the Department of Community Development will amend the Mixed Planned Development Category to allow for small scale mixed use projects with residential above or in close proximity to retail and service uses.

Policy 1.5: Conservation of Large Lot Neighborhoods. Lee County will protect large lot residential by requiring significant buffers between existing lots and higher density residential development or the placement of transitional density units along the perimeter.

Policy 1.6: Collaboration. Encourage the active participation of existing neighborhood associations, homeowners, landlords, and tenants in North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel's programs and planning initiatives.

~~**Policy ___: Restricting Mobile Home and RV Parks.** No property within the North Fort Myers Community may be rezoned to RVPD or MHPD.~~

~~*Motion made by John Gardner 2nd by Tom Hoolihan motion passed unanimously*~~

Policy 1.7: Fair Share Projections. Using the current estimate of affordable housing construction need projected to 2025 2030 as a starting point, the Department of Community Development will prepare an estimate of North Fort Myers' fair share of need by housing type for low-income, workforce, and affordable housing and establish annual planning targets for the delivery of units.

Motion made by Greg Makepeace 2nd by Jared Beck motion passed unanimously

Policy 1.8: Site Assessment & Pilot Projects. Working with the Department of Community Development, Department of Human Services, Lee County Housing Development Corp, Community Land Trust, non-profit housing providers, and representatives from nearby neighborhoods, the North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel should ~~conduct~~ participate in a study identifying potential sites for affordable housing and prepare preliminary studies for design and financial analyses for potential pilot or demonstration projects. Identify neighborhoods where single family housing units can include remodeling to incorporate Mother-In-Law housing additions.

Motion made by Alec Mylan 2nd by Winnie Steil motion passed unanimously

The evaluation should focus on sites with the following general characteristics:

- located within the Intensive Development, Central Urban, and Urban Community on the Lee Plan's Future Land Use Map;
- located where central water/sewer service is available;
- located within comfortable walking distance of mass transit, commercial and personal services, and parks and recreation facilities; and
- located on land previously converted for urban purposes.

Policy ___: Evaluation of Incentives & Regulatory Barriers. The Department of Community Development and Human Services will conduct an evaluation of the effectiveness of county regulatory policies and programs designed to encourage the development of low-income, workforce, and affordable housing. Included in this evaluation should be a review of the following;

- the existing bonus provisions in the Housing Density Bonus Program (Sections 34-1511 to 34-1520 of the Land Development Code);
- the amount of cash contribution per density bonus unit paid to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund under the existing Housing Density Bonus Program;
- the Department of Community Development's existing expedited review system for processing permits for projects with affordable housing; and
- the existing policy regarding the reimbursement of school impact fees, impact fees waiver for Enterprise Zone communities, and impact fee partial reimbursement to non-profit housing providers.

Motion made by Tom Hoolihan 2nd by John Gardner motion passed unanimously

Policy ___: Proportionate Incentives & Assistance. The value of public incentives and assistance available to a project should be proportional to the level of need served by the project, e.g. planned developments with high proportions of affordable housing or greater contributions to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund should receive greater incentives than those providing the minimum level of benefit.

Motion made by John Gardner 2nd by Tom Hoolihan motion passed unanimously

Policy 1.9: Technical Assistance & Public Education. Explore opportunities to expand the technical assistance and public education initiatives provided by the Departments of Community Development, Human Services, and Smart Growth Department to the North Fort Myers Community Planning, community-based organizations, and community housing organizations.

Policy 1.10: New Housing Type in Overlays. Incorporate into Overlay Districts the addition of single person apartment types of 500 square feet or less and have their density calculated as 1/3 of a unit and only pay 1/3 of impact fees.

Motion made by John Gardner 2nd by Jared Beck motion passed unanimously

OBJECTIVE 2.0: LAND USE: CENTERS & CORRIDORS. To maximize the use of existing infrastructure, encouraging reuse and development of underused commercial parcels, expand housing choices, and promote more efficient regional patterns of growth, Lee County will encourage moderate to high intensity, pedestrian-oriented, mixed use development in areas designed as Centers and Corridors in the North Fort Myers Community Plan. By 2012 identify and pursue overlay districts and corridors.

Motion made by John Gardner 2nd by Winnie Steil

Policy 2.1: Market Assessment & Planning Targets. The North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel will work with the Horizon Council and the Department of Community Development to complete an analysis of the market support for retail, office, hospitality, and moderate-to-high density residential uses in the North Fort Myers submarket. The Assessment will be designed to consider the following:

- recommendations from the recently completed Commercial/Industrial Land Use Analysis;
- existing and proposed competitive supply, including planned development in Cape Coral, the City of Fort Myers, and Babcock Ranch; and
- local and regional projections of population and employment growth.

Information from the assessment will be used to guide planning decisions for the Town Center sector plans and requests to increase the inventory of lands planned and zoned for commercial and moderate-to-high density residential use.

Policy 2.2: Preliminary Designation of Town Centers. The North Fort Myers Community Plan designates the following areas as Town Centers appropriate for moderate to high intensity, pedestrian-oriented, mixed use development.

- North Cleveland Avenue & Hancock Bridge Parkway. This area is designed for high-intensity, mixed use development, including residential mid-to-high rise development on the river and mid-rise mixed use development on North Cleveland Avenue and Hancock Bridge Parkway. The district is planned to include pedestrian-friendly streets, public squares and plazas, a public trail/promenade along the Caloosahatchee River, and conservation sites and trails along Yellow Fever Creek. (Refer to the Transpiration Objective for recommendations regarding the eastward extension of Hancock Bridge Parkway.)
- North Tamiami Trail – Pondella Road to the Caloosahatchee River. This area is designated for high intensity, mixed use development including mid-to-high rise development overlooking the river and low-to-mid-rise, mixed use redevelopment and adaptive reuse along Old Tamiami Trail north to the commercial properties at the intersection of Old Tamiami Trail and Pondella Road.
- Bayshore & Samville Roads I-75. This area is designed for moderate intensity, mixed use development with a potential focus on medical and health services along with a mix of retail, professional and personal services, and variety of housing types. Concepts for the development of a healthcare campus and wellness/active living village are favored by the community. The district is planned to include a minimum amount of residential uses, preserve natural areas and stream/wildlife movement corridors with transitions in the scale and intensity of development to ensure compatibility with existing residential development east of Slater Road. (Refer to the Community Facilities and services Objective for recommendation regarding funding for a Medical District Study.)

Motion made by Jared Beck 2nd by Alec Mylan motion carried unanimously

Policy 2.3: Town Center Sector Planning & Overlay Districts. For areas preliminarily identified as Town Centers, the North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel, Department of Community Development, and Smart Growth Department will work together to prepare sector plans, development regulations (zoning overlay districts and design standards), and implementation

plans to ensure development is consistent with the community's vision. The sector plans, development regulations, and implementation plans should be prepared consistent with the following general principles of smart growth and new urbanism:

- Compared development and a mix of uses are encouraged to promote walking; allow for shared parking; support transit; and minimize disturbance of natural areas, wildlife corridors, and drainage ways;
- Buildings should be designed to frame the public realm, enliven streetscapes, and provide for the informal surveillance of public spaces, primary entries, windows, storefronts, porches, and stoops should open onto streets, sidewalks, and public spaces;
- parks, squares, plazas, and promenades should be designed to promote community life and provide a variety of outdoor public space for informal gatherings, public events, and community activities;
- to dispense traffic, promote walking, and provide convenient routes for vehicles and pedestrians, streets should be designed in interconnected networks with generous sidewalks, shade trees, well-marked crossings, and amenities like pedestrian-scaled lighting, benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, and transit shelters; and
- parking areas (except for on-street spaces), loading docks, and service entries should be screened from public view and accessed from alleys, service courts, and side streets.

Policy 2.4: Provision Allowing Increased Development Intensity in Town Centers. To achieve the community's goals for Town Center Development, the County should adopt provisions allowing for greater minimum, maximum based, and maximum total densities and building heights than are currently allowed under the Lee Plan. These provisions should only be applicable to projects in areas designated as Town Centers, addressed in an adopted sector plan, and regulated by the Town Center Overlay District.

Policy 2.5: Designation of Neighborhood Centers. The North Fort Myers Community Plan designates the following areas as Neighborhood Centers appropriate for moderate intensity, pedestrian-oriented, mixed use development:

- Littleton & North Cleveland Avenue;
- North Tamiami Trail & Del Prado Boulevard;
- North Tamiami Trail & Nalle Grade Road;
- Hancock Bridge Parkway and Orange Grove Boulevard;
- North Tamiami Trail & Pine Island/Bayshore Roads;
- Bayshore Road & Slater Road; and
- Bayshore Road & Hart Road

For these areas, the community favors neighborhood-serving mixed use development' pedestrian-friendly street, site, and building designs; the incorporation of live/work, ~~townhouse~~ multi-family, and attached housing; and sidewalk and path connections to nearby neighborhoods, parks, and public uses. These Neighborhood Center designations are intended to replace the designations show on Commercial Site Location Standards Map (Lee Plan Map 19).

Policy 2.6: Neighborhood Center Overlay District. For areas preliminarily identified as Neighborhood Centers, the North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel, Department of Community Development, and Smart Growth Department will work together to prepare revised Neighborhood Center Overlay District providing the following:

- Permitted and prohibited uses;
- Standards for building, site, landscape, and sign design;
- Standards for pedestrian and bicycle facilities;
- Building setbacks and build-to lines;
- Conservation of natural features and native vegetation;
- Requirements for shared access and side/rear yard parking'
- Incentives (e.g. regulatory relief, increased height and density, etc.) for the redevelopment of obsolete and poorly performing commercial centers; and
- Incentives for projects incorporating mixed uses, public amenities, and affordable housing.

Policy 2.7: Corridor Overlay District. For areas along major road corridors outside designated Town Centers and Neighborhood Centers, the North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel, Department of Community Development, and Smart Growth Department will work together to prepare a Corridor Overlay District as part of the Land Development Code requiring enhanced landscaping, greater buffering and shading of parking areas, improved commercial signage, enhanced standards to ensure architectural quality and compatibility, and incentives for quality development. At minimum, the Corridor Overlay District will provide the following:

- permitted and prohibited uses;
- standards for building, site, landscape, and sign design;
- standards for pedestrian and bicycle facilities;
- building setbacks and build-to-lines;
- conservation of natural features and native vegetation;
- buffers to adjacent residential neighborhoods;
- requirements for shared access and side/rear yard parking;
- incentives (e.g. regulatory relief, increased density, etc.) for the redevelopment of obsolete and poorly performing commercial centers; ~~and~~
- incentives for projects incorporating mixed uses, public amenities, and affordable housing; and
- shared parking.

Motion made by Jared Beck 2nd by Wayne Daltry motion passed unanimously

Once adopted, deviations that would result in a reduction of landscaping, buffering, signage or deviation from design standards will not be supported.

Policy 2.8 Improving Older Commercial Properties. The North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel will work with the Department of Community Development, the North Fort Myers Chamber, Horizon Council, and private property owners to develop incentives for bringing older development into compliance with regulations adopted as a result of the North Fort Myers Community Plan including but not limited to private public partnerships.

Motion made by Jared Beck 2nd John Gardner motion passed unanimously

Policy 2.9: Use Compatibility. By the end of 2008, Lee County will review existing restrictions on the location of uses considered detrimental by the community, e.g. adult-oriented businesses, bottle club establishments, freestanding bars or lounges, or businesses with significant outdoor stage, display, or delivery areas, pawn shops, gambling establishments, and gun/firearm shops from locating near existing or approved residential neighborhoods, mixed use developments including residential, public park and recreation facilities, and public or private schools.

Motion made by Greg Makepeace 2nd by John Gardner motion passed unanimously

Policy 2.10: Cross Parcel Access. The Department of Community Development will conduct a review of existing Land Development Code provisions requiring commercial developments to provide privately-owned road and sidewalk connections between adjacent existing and planning commercial uses to minimize access points onto primary road corridors.

OBJECTIVE 3.0: TRANSPORTATION. By 2012 will have neighborhood, corridors and community interface improvements identified? Transportation improvements should address the community's desire to provide convenient access to town and neighborhood centers; serve regional destinations; improve the visual character of North Fort Myers; mitigate the effects of through traffic on local businesses and residents; and provide for the needs of transit-dependent residents, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

Motion made by John Gardner 2nd by Greg Makepeace motion passed unanimously

Policy 3.1: Transportation Corridors. By 2009 review Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Lee County Department of Transportations 2030 plan for recommendations and improvements for the North Fort Myers Community planning area.

Motion made by John Gardner 2nd by Greg Makepeace motion passed unanimously

Policy 3.2: Gateways, Streetscape, & Landscape Improvements. The North Fort Myers Community Planning panel will work with the Lee County Roadway Landscape Advisory Committee to complete plans for streetscape and landscape improvements in gateway locations and along major roadways consistent with the general provisions of the LeeScape Master Plan, including Bayshore and Pine Island Roads, North Cleveland Avenue, North Tamiami Trail, Pondella Road, Hancock Bridge Parkway, and Del Prado Boulevard. Before finalization, plans should be presented for review to the North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel.

Policy 3.3: Planning & Design of Arterials & Collectors. Decisions regarding the functional classification and future improvements or extension of Littleton Road, Hancock Bridge Parkway, Hart Road, Slater Road, and other roadways not currently shown on the Future Functional Classification Map (Map 3B) should be based on a careful analysis of need, community and environmental impact, and the potential for incorporation of context-sensitive design treatments. Public participation in planning and design processes for these and other road improvements should provide opportunities for involvement of the North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel and other North Fort Myers stakeholders.

Policy 3.4 Hancock Bridge Parkway Extension. The county will initiate a study to determine the feasibility, cost, and timing of the eastward extension of Hancock Bridge Parkway. The scope of the study should address the following:

- effect on regional traffic and circulation patterns;
- preferred alignment and conceptual design cross-section for the roadway;
- land use and design recommendations for redevelopment of property along the roadway;
- preliminary regulatory strategies to ensure appropriate redevelopment; and
- preliminary cost estimates and timeline for engineering design, right-of-way acquisition, and project construction.

Policy 3.5: Standards for Walkable Urban Thoroughfares. The Department of Public Works is encouraged to develop alternative design standards for arterials and collectors serving areas designated in the North Fort Myers Community Plan as a Town Center or Neighborhood Center. Such standards may draw on guidance in Institute for Traffic Engineers Proposed Recommended Practice, Contest Sensitive Solutions for Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities.

Policy 3.6: Bus Transit Enhancements. The North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel will work with Lee Tran to identify opportunities to improve service, frequency, routes, and stop amenities in the community.

Policy 3.7: Improvements for Regional Benefit. Road capacity improvements needed within North Fort Myers to serve demand generated outside the community should be designed to minimize impacts, improve visual character, and improve local access and mobility.

Policy 3.8: I-75 Interchange & Del Prado Extension. The county will complete a detailed analysis of the feasibility of a new I-75 interchange and the potential alignment for a connection to Del Prado Boulevard. As part of the analysis, impacts on existing neighborhoods, local streets, and conservation lands should be evaluated and reported to the North Fort Myers Community Panel. The report should include the termination point of Nalle Grade Road at US 41 and I-75.

Motion made by Alec Mylan 2nd by Greg Makepeace motion passed unanimously

OBJECTIVE 4.0: COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES. ~~Lee County will seek to ensure the continued delivery of high quality, accessible community facilities and services to meet the educational, recreational, informational and public safety, health, and welfare needs of residents, visitors, and stakeholders of North Fort Myers. By 2012 the community facilities and services needed to meet the needs of Town Centers, Neighborhood Centers and corridors will be identified and deficiencies addressed.~~

Motion made by Jared Beck 2nd by Wayne Daltry motioned passed unanimously

Policy 4.1: Effectiveness of Existing Plan Objectives & Policies. County objectives and policies in Chapter IV of the Lee Plan regarding the provisions of community facilities and services, including those addressing adequate levels of service and extension of service, will be maintained and evaluated for effectiveness on an on-going basis. Proposed changes affecting existing or planned facilities and services in North Fort Myers, including changes in the scope or timing of planned capital improvements, will be reported to include input from the North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel and North Fort Myers stakeholders.

Motion made by Jared Beck 2nd by Jim Toth motion passed unanimously

Policy 4.2: Medical District Planning. The North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel will work with the Department of Community Development, Horizon Council, Human Services Department, Lee County Health Department, Medical Society, and Lee Memorial Health Systems to obtain funding for and complete an analysis for the development of a new hospital and related medical services in North Fort Myers. develop a collaborative effort for funding a feasibility study for this project. They should also work together to complete an analysis for the feasibility of developing a new hospital, 24/7 urgent care facility, ambulatory surgery center, physician specialty offices and related medical diagnostic and lab services in the northeast area of North Fort Myers. The analysis should provide the following:

- a preliminary development program indicating the types, sizes, and phasing of buildings and site improvements;
- an evaluation of sites with the potential to support the preliminary development program including an evaluation of infrastructure capacity;
- a market assessment and financing plan to assess project feasibility by private and public sectors;
- recommended planning policy and regulatory changes required to support a preferred development strategy; and
- a preliminary development timeline and estimate of timeline for achieving necessary entitlements; and
- Identify other or associated uses within the Medical Corridor.

Motion made by Alec Mylan 2nd by Greg Makepeace motion passed unanimously

Policy 4.3: Public Works Project Enhancements. Lee County will coordinate planning for public works projects, such as street resurfacing, repairs, maintenance, drainage swales, and other surface water management system improvements, with the North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel so that potential landscape and aesthetic enhancements may be identified and incorporated in improvement plans. The North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel encourages Lee County to review the feasibility of a waste water plant solids program for treatment and reuse.

Motion made by Jim Toth 2nd by Wayne Daltry motion passed unanimously

Policy 4.4: Water Supply and Waste Water Planning & Capacity. The North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel will support educational efforts planned by the Department of Public Works, the Lee County Water Supply Authority, and the South Florida Water Management District to educate North Fort Myers stakeholders about the capacity of existing water systems to support existing and planned developments. Regardless of ownership the North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel would request that the Lee County Department of Public Works coordinate services for waste water and water supply so that no area designated under this plan is under served.

Motion made by Jim Toth 2nd by Wayne Daltry motion passed unanimously

Policy 4.5: Septic Tanks & Waste Water Treatment. Encourage Lee County to enforce the state statute and any other regulations regarding required hook up to existing sewage lines for all properties. To support and encourage the expansion of new sewer lines to discourage new septic tank systems and replace existing septic tanks.

Provide for and continue support for effective water conservation policies to include appropriate public educational campaigns and county staffing. Encourage the expansion of reuse to include both commercial and residential opportunities.

Motion made by Jim Toth 2nd by Wayne Daltry motion passed unanimously

OBJECTIVE 5.0: PARKS, RECREATION & CONSERVATION. Lee County will work with the North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel and North Fort Myers stakeholders to protect and conserve natural resources, expand recreation opportunities, and provide a broad mix of park and recreation facilities to support the livability, sustainability, and economic vitality of the community. By 2012 identify park, recreation, open space, environmental protection and restoration needs and deficiencies to pursue remedies.

Motion made by Debbie Jackow 2nd by Jared Beck motion passed unanimously

Policy 5.1 Level of Services Standards for Community Parks. To ensure parks and recreation facilities are reasonably accessible and adequate to meet the needs of residents, the North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel will work with the Department Parks and Recreation to evaluate the Lee Plan non-regulatory, desired level of service standards for community parks and generalized service area boundaries.

Policy 5.2: North Fort Myers Community Park. The County will work with the community to ensure that the development of the North Fort Myers Community Park is integrated into the surrounding development and open space areas, including incorporation of the development of a community park facility. The concept would be for the park to act as a hub, connected to other open space/recreational opportunities through pedestrian or bicycle linkages, either along public rights of way or through adjacent developments.

Motion made by Greg Makepeace 2nd by Jim Toth motion passed unanimously

Policy 5.3: Recreational Programming and Access. Lee County will work with the North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel and North Fort Myers Stakeholders to protect and to conserve natural resources, expand recreation opportunities and accessibility for the use of existing waterways, and provide a broad mix of parks, trails, and water recreation areas, to support the lifestyle preferences, livability, sustainability, recreational interest and economic vitality of the community.

Policy 5.4: Stewardship & Management of Conservation 20/20 Lands. The North Fort Myers Planning Panel will work with the Department of Parks and Recreation to finalize and refine stewardship and management plans for the Prairie Pines, Caloosahatchee Creeks, Yellow Fever Creek and Powell Creek Preserves. 20/20 Conservation Lands within North Fort Myers.

Motion made by Debbie Jackow 2nd by Jared Beck

Policy 5.5: Assessment of Lands for Acquisition. The North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel will work with the Division of County Lands and Department of Parks and Recreation to identify additional sites and corridors for acquisition under the Conservation 20/20 program. Sites along planned trails, wildlife corridors, greenways, and major creeks should be carefully considered, as should those providing access to the Caloosahatchee River.

Policy 5.6: Greenway Plan Implementation. The North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel will work with the Department of Parks and Recreation to implement recommendations for the Greenways Master Plan. As a first priority, the community supports development of the Tamiami Trail North segment of the Charlotte-Lee Collier Greenway and water access and signage improvements to access the Blueways designated along Yellow Fever Creek and along the Caloosahatchee River at Caloosahatchee Creeks Preserve. The North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel will also assist in the identification of trails connecting neighborhoods, conservation areas, parks, and recreation facilities and areas and the water access points.

Motion made by Greg Makepeace 2nd by Debbie Jackow motion passed unanimously

Policy 5.7: Small Site Conservation Program. The North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel will work with the Department of County Lands and Department of Parks and Recreation to explore the feasibility of establishing a small site conservation program to transfer land acquisitions or conservation easement to link larger parks, preserves, and mitigation areas; protect native trees and vegetation, creeks, wetland systems, and wildlife movement corridors; and provide connections to greenways and blueways.

Motion made by Greg Makepeace 2nd by Debbie Jackow motion passed unanimously

Policy 5.8: Conservation Policy Refinements. The North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel will work with the Department of Community Development and Public Works (Environmental Science and Natural Resource Divisions) to pursue the Lee Master Mitigation Plan and to explore the adoption of the following conservation policies:

- Development proposals adjacent to the Caloosahatchee River and its tributaries will include floodplain protection plans prior to zoning approval;
- ~~To protect water quality of natural water bodies, all new development adjacent to the Caloosahatchee River and its tributaries and outside a designed Town Center or Neighborhood Center must provide a 50' vegetative buffer adjacent to the top of bank; and~~
- The off-site mitigation of impacts to indigenous areas, wetlands, or wildlife habitat for development in North Fort Myers will occur within North Fort Myers.
- Participate in the Lee County water quality programs that are being developed to address required Total Maximum Daily Loads.

Motion made by Jim Toth 2nd by Greg Makepeace motion passed unanimously

Policy 5.9: Wildlife Movement Corridors. ~~For development in the area north east of Coon Road and the Caloosahatchee River, within the Planning area the Community Development Department of Environmental Science will work with the North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel to identify opportunities for the establishment and protection of wildlife movement corridors to include the review of development to provide for interconnections of conservation easements to provide for wildlife movement.~~

Motion made by Debbie Jackow 2nd by Greg Makepeace motion passed unanimously

OBJECTIVE 6.0: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION. ~~To ensure community participation in planning and zoning and public investment decisions affecting North Fort Myers, the County will encourage and solicit public input and participation prior to and during the review and adoption of count regulations, land development code provisions, policies, zoning approval, capital investment decisions, and administrative actions. Beginning in 2008 the North Fort Myers Planning Panel will promote with Lee County enhanced community participation in the planning of capital improvements and decisions made in the North Fort Myers Community Planned area.~~

Motion made by Jim Toth 2nd by Alec Mylan motion passed unanimously

Policy 6.1: Notice of Land Development Code and Lee Plan Amendments. As a courtesy, Lee County will register citizens groups and civic organizations that desire notification of pending review of Land Development Code or Lee Plan amendments. Upon registration, Lee County will provide registered groups with documentation regarding pending amendments. This notice is a courtesy only and is not jurisdictional. Accordingly, the county's failure to mail or to timely mail the notice, will not constitute a defect in notice or bar a public hearing from occurring as scheduled.

Policy 6.2: Document Clearinghouse. Lee County will work with the North Fort Myers community to establish a Document Clearing House, where copies of selected documents from permit applications, variance request, staff reports and 2020 Plan status updates. Hearing Examiner recommendations and resolutions and Administrative Variances and for any development in the community will be kept for public inspection. The County's failure to provide or to timely provide documents to the Document Clearing House, or failure of the Document Clearing house to receive documents, will not constitute a defect in notice or bar a public hearing from occurring as scheduled.

Policy 6.3: Project Referrals & Public Information Meetings. ~~Owners or agents for any rezoning, variance, or special exception request in North Fort Myers must contact the North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel and arrange for one public information meeting during which the owner or agent will provide a general overview of the project and hear feedback from interested stakeholder including members of the North Fort Myers Design Review Committee. The applicant is fully responsible for providing the meeting space and providing security measure as needed. Lee County encourages zoning staff to participate in such public informational meetings. This meeting must be conducted before the applicant can be found sufficient. Subsequent to this meeting, the applicant must provide county staff with a meeting summary document that contains the following information: the date, time, and location of the meeting; a list of attendees, a summary of the concerns or issues that were raised at the meeting; and a proposal for how the applicant will respond to any issues that were raised. The North Fort Myers Community Planning Panel will be given the first opportunity for one public informational meeting for any rezoning, variance or special exception in North Fort Myers at a location and time of mutual convenience.~~

6 Implementation

Objective / Policy	Action Item	Timeframe	Agency
Objective 1.0: Land Use: Neighborhoods and Housing	Complete Land Use and Housing Review by neighborhood and corridor.	2012	
Policy 1.1: Code Enforcement	Support continuation and expansion of code enforcement initiatives in neighborhoods with high incidences of violations. Provide periodic reports of enforcement activities.	On-going	LC Code Enforcement, DHS, NFM CPP
Policy 1.2: Neighborhood District Planning	Continue implementation of Neighborhood District Revitalization Plans.	On-going	NFM CPP, DHS
Policy 1.3: Housing Maintenance & Repair	Explore opportunities to expand DHS programs to help maintain, repair, and improve existing owner-occupied housing.	On-going	NFM CPP, DHS
Policy 1.4: Small Scale Mixed Use Projections	Amend Mixed Planned Development category to allow for small scale mixed use projects with residential above or in close proximity to retail and service uses.		DCD
Policy 1.5: Conservation of Large Lot Neighborhoods	Require significant buffers between existing lots and higher density residential development or placement of transitional density units along the perimeter to protect large lot residential.		
Policy 1.6: Collaboration	Encourage participation of existing neighborhood associations, homeowners, landlords, and tenants in NFM CPP's programs and initiatives.		
Policy 1.7: Fair Share Projections	Prepare an estimate of NFM's fair share of need by housing type for low-income, workforce, and affordable housing and establish annual planning targets for the delivery of units.		DCD
Policy 1.8: Site Assessment & Pilot Projects	Participate in a study identifying potential sites for affordable housing and prepare preliminary studies for design and financial analyses for potential pilot or demonstration projects. Identify neighborhoods where single-family housing units can include remodeling to incorporate mother-in-law housing additions.		DCP, DHS, LC Housing Development Corp, Community Land Trust, NFM CPP
Policy 1.9: Technical Assistance & Public Education	Explore opportunities to expand the technical assistance and public education initiatives.		
Policy 1.10: New Housing Types in Overlays	Incorporate into Overlay Districts the addition of single person apartment types of 500 square feet or less. Calculate density as 1/.3 a unit and charge 1/3 impact fees.		
Objective 2.0: Land Use: Centers & Corridors	Identify and pursue overlay districts and corridors.	2012	

Objective / Policy	Action Item	Timeframe	Agency
Policy 2.1: Market Assessment & Planning Targets	Complete an analysis of the market support for retail, office, hospitality, and moderate-to-high density residential uses in the NFM submarket. Use assessment to guide planning decisions for Town Center sector plans and requests to increase the inventory of lands planned and zoned for commercial and moderate-to-high density residential use.		NFM CPP, Horizon Council, DCD
Policy 2.2: Preliminary Designation of Town Centers	Designate North Cleveland Avenue & Hancock Bridge Parkway, North Tamiami Trail from Pondella Road to the Caloosahatchee River, and Bayshore Road and I-75 as Town Centers.		
Policy 2.3: Town Center Sector Planning & Overlay Districts	Prepare sector plans, development regulations (zoning overlay districts and design standards), and implementation plans for Town Centers to ensure consistency with community's vision.		NFM CPP, DCD, Smart Growth Dept.
Policy 2.4: Provision Allowing Increased Development Intensity in Town Centers	Adopt provisions allowing for greater minimum, maximum based, and maximum total densities and building heights than are currently allowed under the Lee Plan for projects in Town Centers.		
Policy 2.5: Designation of Neighborhood Centers	Designate Littleton and North Cleveland Avenue, North Tamiami Trail and Del Prado Blvd, North Tamiami Trail and Nalle Grade Road, Hancock Bridge Parkway and Orange Grove Blvd, North Tamiami Trail and Pine Island Road/Bayshore Road, Bayshore Road and Slater Road, and Bayshore Road and Hart Road as Neighborhood Centers.		
Policy 2.6: Neighborhood Center Overlay District	Prepare revised Neighborhood Center Overlay Districts with standards for design, uses, setbacks, landscaping, conservation, parking, and incentives.		NFM CPP, DCD, Smart Growth Dept.
Policy 2.7: Corridor Overlay District	Prepare Corridor Overlay District as part of the LDC that requires enhanced landscaping, greater buffering and shading of parking, improved commercial signage, enhanced standards to ensure architectural quality and compatibility, and incentives for quality development.		NFM CPP, DCD, Smart Growth Dept.
Policy 2.8: Improving Older Commercial Properties	Develop incentives for bringing older development into compliance with regulations adopted as a result of the NFM Community Plan including, but not limited to, private/public partnerships.		NFM CPP, DCD, NFM Chamber, Horizon Council. Property owners
Policy 2.9: Use Compatibility	Review existing restrictions on the location of uses considered detrimental by the community, e.g. adult-oriented businesses, bottle club establishments, freestanding bars or lounges, or businesses with significant outdoor storage, display or delivery areas, pawn shops, gambling establishments, and gun/firearm shops from locating near existing or approved residential neighborhoods, mixed use developments including residential, public park and recreation facilities, and public or private schools.	End of 2008	

Objective / Policy	Action Item	Timeframe	Agency
Policy 2.10: Cross Parcel Access	Review existing LDC provisions requiring commercial developments to provide privately-owned road and sidewalk connections between adjacent existing and planned commercial uses to minimize access points onto primary road corridors.		DCD
Objective 3.0: Transportation	Identify neighborhood, corridors and community interface improvements.	2012	
Policy 3.1: Transportation Corridors	Review Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Lee County Department of Transportation 2030 plan for recommendations and improvements for the NFM CPA.	2009	
Policy 3.2: Gateways, Streetscape, & Landscape Improvements	Complete plans for streetscape and landscape improvements in gateway locations and along major roadways consistent with general provisions of LeeScape Master Plan. Present plans for review to NFM CPP before finalization.		NFM CPP, LC Roadway Landscape Advisory Committee
Policy 3.3: Planning & Design of Arterials & Collectors	Provide opportunities for public involvement. In making decisions to alter functional classification and future improvements or extension of Littleton Road, Hancock Bridge Parkway, Hart Road, Slater Road, and other roadways based on careful analysis of need, impact, and sensitivity to context.		
Policy 3.4: Hancock Bridge Parkway Extension	Initiate a study to determine the feasibility, cost, and timing of the eastward extension of Hancock Bridge Parkway.		
Policy 3.5: Standards for Walkable Urban Thoroughfares	Encourage the development of alternative design standards for arterials and collectors serving designated Town Centers or Neighborhood Centers.		DPW
Policy 3.6: Bus Transit Enhancements	Identify opportunities to improve service, frequency, routes, and stop amenities in NFM.		NFM CPP, Lee Tran
Policy 3.7: Improvements for Regional Benefit	Design road capacity improvements to serve demand generated outside NFM to minimize impacts, improve visual character, and improve local access and mobility.		
Policy 3.8: I-75 Interchange & Del Prado Extension	Complete detailed analysis of the feasibility of a new I-75 interchange and the potential alignment for a connection to Del Prado Blvd. Evaluate and report impacts on existing neighborhoods, local streets, and conservation lands; include termination point of Nalle Grade Road at US 41 and I-75.		
Objective 4.0: Community Facilities & Services	Identify community facilities and services needed to meet the needs of Town Centers, Neighborhood Centers and corridors and address deficiencies.	2012	
Policy 4.1: Effectiveness of Existing Plan Objectives & Policies	Maintain and evaluate county objectives and policies in Chapter IV of the Lee Plan regarding provision of community facilities and services including those addressing adequate level of service and extension of service. Report proposed changes including scope or timing of capital improvements to NFM CPP and community stakeholders.	On-going	

Objective / Policy	Action Item	Timeframe	Agency
Policy 4.2: Medical District Planning	Develop a collaborative effort for funding a feasibility study for medical district; complete an analysis for the feasibility of developing a new hospital, 24/7 urgent care facility, ambulatory surgery center, physician specialty offices, and related medical diagnostic and lab services in northeast NFM.		NFM CPP, DCD, Horizon Council, HSD, HD, Medical Society, Lee Memorial Health Systems
Policy 4.3: Public Works Project Enhancements	Coordinate planning for public works projects to identify and incorporate potential landscape and aesthetic improvements in improvement plans. Review the feasibility of a waste water treatment plant solids program for treatment and reuse.		NFM CPP, Lee County
Policy 4.4: Water Supply and Waste Water Planning & Capacity	Support efforts to educate NFM stakeholders about the capacity of existing water systems to support existing and planned developments.		NFM CPP, DPW, Lee County Water Supply Authority, SFWMD
Policy 4.5: Septic Tanks & Waste Water Treatment	Enforce state statutes and regulations regarding required hookup to existing sewage lines for all properties; support expansion of new sewer lines to discourage and replace septic systems; support water conservation policies that include public education programs; encourage commercial and residential water reuse.		
Objective 5.0: Parks, Recreation & Conservation	Identify park, recreation, open space, environmental protection, and restoration needs and deficiencies to pursue remedies.	2012	
Policy 5.1: Level of Services Standards for Community Parks	Evaluate the Lee Plan non-regulatory, desired level of service standards for community parks and generalized service area boundaries to ensure parks and recreation facilities are reasonably accessible and adequate to meet resident needs.		NFM CPP, Parks & Rec.
Policy 5.2: North Fort Myers Community Park	Integrate NFM Community Park into surrounding development and open space areas, including incorporation of the development of a community park facility.		
Policy 5.3: Recreational Programming and Access	Protect and conserve natural resources, expand recreation opportunities and accessibility to waterways, provide a broad mix of trails, parks, and water recreation areas.		
Policy 5.4: Stewardship & Management of Conservation 20/20 Lands	Finalize and refine stewardship and management plans for 20/20 Conservation Land.		NFM CPP, Parks & Rec.
Policy 5.5: Assessment of Lands for Acquisition	Identify additional sites and corridors for acquisition under the Conservation 20/20 Program.		NFM CPP, Division of County Lands, Parks & Rec.
Policy 5.6: Greenway Plan Implementation	Implement recommendations for the Greenways Master; assist in identification of trails connecting neighborhoods, conservation areas, parks, recreation facilities, and water access points.		NFM CPP, Parks & Rec.

Objective / Policy	Action Item	Timeframe	Agency
Policy 5.7: Small Site Conservation Program	Explore feasibility of establishing small site conservation program to transfer land acquisitions or conservation easements to link larger parks, preserves, and mitigation areas, protect native trees and vegetation, creeks, wetland systems, and wildlife movement corridors, and provide connections to greenways and blueways.		NFM CPP, Division of County Lands, Parks & Rec.
Policy 5.8: Conservation Policy Refinements	Pursue Lee County Master Mitigation Plan and explore adoption of conservation policies.		NFM CPP, DCD, DPW
Policy 5.9: Wildlife Movement Corridors	Identify opportunities for the establishment and protection of wildlife corridors to include the review of development to provide for interconnections of conservation easements to provide for wildlife movement.		DCD Environmental Science division, NFM CPP
Objective 6.0: Public Participation	NFM CPP and Lee County will promote enhanced community participation in the planning of capital improvements and decisions made in the NFM Community Planning Area.	Starting 2008	
Policy 6.1: Notice of Land Development Code and Lee Plan Amendments	Register citizens groups and civic organizations to receive notification and documentation regarding pending LDC or Lee Plan amendments.		
Policy 6.2: Document Clearinghouse	Establish a Document Clearinghouse for selected documents from permit applications, variance requests, staff reports, 2020 Plan status updates, Hearing Examiner recommendations and resolutions, and Administrative Variances for public inspection.		
Policy 6.3: Project Referrals & Public Information Meetings	Give NFM CPP the first opportunity for one public informational meeting for any rezoning, variance, or special exception in NFM at a location and time of mutual convenience.		

