



**LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY  
OLD LEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
2120 MAIN STREET, FORT MYERS, FL 33901  
BOARD CHAMBERS  
MONDAY, APRIL 28, 2014  
8:30 AM**

**AGENDA**

1. Call to Order/Review of Affidavit of Publication/Pledge of Allegiance
2. Public Forum
3. Approval of Minutes – March 24, 2014
4. MPO Land Use Scenario Presentation
5. Lee Plan Amendments
  - A. [CPA2013-00008 Estero Apartments](#)
  - B. [CPA2014-00003 Estero Plan](#)
6. New Horizon 2035: Plan Amendments
  - A. [CPA2011-00008 Future Land Use Element](#) – Continued
  - B. [Future Land Use Map](#)
7. Other Business
8. Adjournment – Next Meeting Date: Monday, May 19, 2014

A verbatim record of the proceeding will be necessary to appeal a decision made at this hearing. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, reasonable accommodations will be made upon request. If you are in need of a reasonable accommodation or would like additional information, please contact Janet Miller at 239-533-8583.



**CPA2014-00003**

**ESTERO COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE**

**AMENDMENT TO THE**

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**LEE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

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**THE LEE PLAN**

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**LPA Public Hearing Document**

**For the**

**April 28, 2014 Public Hearing**

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*Lee County Planning Division*

*1500 Monroe Street*

*P.O. Box 398*

*Fort Myers, FL 33902-0398*

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**April 18, 2014**

**LEE COUNTY  
DIVISION OF PLANNING  
STAFF REPORT FOR  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT  
CPA2014-00003**



**Text Amendment**



**Map Amendment**

	<b>This Document Contains the Following Reviews</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Staff Review</b>
	<b>Local Planning Agency Review and Recommendation</b>
	<b>Board of County Commissioners Hearing for Transmittal</b>
	<b>Staff Response to the DCA Objections, Recommendations, and Comments (ORC) Report</b>
	<b>Board of County Commissioners Hearing for Adoption</b>

STAFF REPORT PREPARATION DATE: April 18, 2011

**PART I - BACKGROUND AND STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**A. SUMMARY OF APPLICATION**

**1. APPLICANTS:**

Estero Community Planning Panel

**2. REQUEST:**

Amend the Lee Plan and Future Land Use Map to incorporate the following results of the Estero community planning panel effort:

- New and revised vision, goal, objectives, and policies that reflect the Estero Community Planning efforts.

## **B. STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND FINDINGS OF FACT SUMMARY**

### **1. RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the Board of County Commissioners *transmit* the proposed amendment to Lee Plan as shown in Appendix A. This amendment will revise the current Estero Goal 19 in order to address the community's updated vision and community needs.

### **2. BASIS AND RECOMMENDED FINDINGS OF FACT:**

- In August 2011, the Board of County Commissioners (Board) approved community planning grant applications for the development and update of the community plan for Estero.
- During the course of the three year planning effort, the Estero Community Planning Panel organizations facilitated extensive public input processes through which community members were able to discuss the future planning needs, development concerns, and desired vision for the Estero community. This effort included the following public input opportunities:
  - A community vision workshop in November 2010; and
  - Special issue workshops related to Estero's historic character, transportation connections, mixed-use development, community center, employment centers, and future land use classifications, densities, and uses.
- The three-year planning effort has resulted in a new set of goals, objectives, and policies for Estero which was approved by the Estero Community Planning Panel at their March 31, 2014 meeting.

## **C. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **LEE COUNTY COMMUNITY PLANNING HISTORY**

#### **Community Plan Development**

Community planning has a history that closely follows comprehensive planning efforts in Lee County. Lee County adopted its first comprehensive plan in 1984. Around the same time that Lee County was initiating county-wide comprehensive planning efforts, several communities expressed a desire to initiate area-specific planning projects. As a result of this

interest, in 2001 the Board of County Commissioners initiated a community planning program, through which the county provides grants to support grass roots community planning efforts.

Since 2001, interest in community planning efforts has increased as citizens sought opportunities to have input in the development of their local communities. The county promotes these local grass roots planning efforts by supporting local community planning panels. The planning panels are groups of community members from the local area who have taken the time and initiative to build community consensus about how the community sees its future. The panels receive professional planning assistance in the development, formation, adoption, and implementation of the community plans, which are adopted as part of the Lee County comprehensive plan and land development code. The professional assistance comes from public and private sector planners who work to help the local communities build consensus about how to address their community's many interests and needs. As a result of the planning panel's efforts, a local community can work towards the realization of the community's future vision.

## **ESTERO COMMUNITY PLANNING**

Over the last decade, the community of Estero has been one of the county's fastest growing areas of Lee County, with much of the growth fueled by new residential neighborhoods. The community lies on the banks of Estero Bay in southern Lee County, north of Bonita Springs, east of the DR/GR area, and south of the San Carlos community. In the 1990s, the Estero Preservation Committee sought to develop a community plan, to support, define, and implement their community's sense of place and character through community planning policies and land development standards. The plan sought to accomplish this goal by confirming how the community wanted to look and directing future and growth and development consistent with this vision. These community efforts sought to address specific community concerns including: community design and architectural character, park and recreations facilities and resources, transportation resources, natural resources, and community planning participation. The results of these planning efforts form the basis of Estero's goal, objectives, and policies, which the Board adopted into the Lee Plan in 2002 as Goal 19.

Due to its well defined architectural standards, active community leadership, and strong community planning tradition, the 2002 plan help Estero create a strong sense of place and unified sense of character. However, the plan also has had challenges in defining a town center; providing connections between neighborhoods, economic areas, public facilities, community parks; and supporting is historic places.

In 2010, the Estero community decided to update its plan and expand its planning efforts to include these issues and areas not fully addressed by the 2002 plan. The Board supported this effort by providing Estero Community Planning Panel a community planning grant, through which the community has hired professional planning assistance. The community has held regular community workshops and meetings to help the community understand the successes and challenges of the 2002 plan and help better define their future planning goal and vision. The result of these efforts is that Estero has updated its community plan vision, goal, objectives, and policies based on feedback provided by community members.

## **PART II - STAFF ANALYSIS**

### **A. STAFF DISCUSSION**

The Estero Community Planning Panel worked with a consultant from 2011-2013 during which time drafts of the Estero community plan were submitted to the Lee County Department of Community Development. However, in March 2013 the consultant left the project after accepting another position without having completed the final draft. In order to ensure the project was completed, planning staff stepped in and provided assistance to the community to assist draft the vision, goal, objectives, and policies. The final draft was accepted by the Estero Community Planning Panel on March 31, 2014. The Division of Planning distributed copies of the drafts and requested comments from various county departments, including:

- County Attorney's Office
- Department of Natural Resources
- Lee Tran
- Parks and Recreation
- Lee County Department of Transportation
- Development Services Division
- Environmental Sciences Division
- Zoning Division

Written comments were received from the County Attorney's Office, the Department of Transportation, Zoning Division, Environmental Sciences Division, and Development Services Division.

In April, 2014 the plan for Estero community planning area was submitted to the county for consideration as amendments in the Lee Plan. Staff has reviewed these plans and found it to be sufficient. The comments in this staff report are based on the review of final plans.

The following is the evaluation of the proposed vision, goal, objectives, and policies for the Estero planning area.

## **B. ESTERO COMMUNITY PLANNING**

### **Estero Vision Statement and Goal 34 Overview**

Estero is well-defined community with distinct character and a well organized community planning process. The first community plan for Estero was adopted in 2002 after an extensive public input process. The plan sought to address three central community needs:

- Make Estero's commercial corridors as attractive as the surrounding residential communities;
- Cause persons traveling through Estero to know that it is a unique and outstanding place; and
- Achieve maximum compatibility between adjacent commercial and residential uses.

Additionally, the plan sought to provide Estero with the highest appearance standards of any southwest Florida community, require all Estero developers to conduct a meeting in the community as part of its plan amendment, zoning, or site development process, and ensure future development efforts meet and implement the community's character and vision.

Since the adoption of that plan in 2002 Estero has gone through a period of tremendous change as indicated by the following growth statistics:

- Estero's population has tripled;
- About 4 million square feet of retail/commercial space has been constructed; and
- Another 7 million square feet of retail/commercial space has been zoned for future development.

The 2002 community plan focused almost exclusively upon commercial corridors on US 41 and Corkscrew Road because these areas were under a great deal of pressure from growth and development. However, the focus on issues concerning development of the community's commercial corridors left issues concerning older development areas, historic community resources, neighborhood connectivity, mixed-use development, and town center areas not fully addressed. The community sought to deal with these concerns by initiating an effort to update its plan and more fully address these issues in 2010. As a result, the 2014 Estero Community Plan establishes a framework for developing mixed-use centers, better connecting its neighborhoods, commercial areas, public facilities, and community parks in the Estero community area through policies that:

- Promote its community character through the implementation of planning and development practices that create a visually attractive community, an enhanced quality of life, and foster a unique sense of place;

- Foster Estero’s quality of life and diverse local economy through mixed-use centers and targeted economic areas;
- Support Estero’s quality of life, promote the community’s unique character, and provide for a multigenerational community;
- Facilitate the development of an interconnected, well linked community;
- Ensure that Estero’s natural environment enhances the character and quality of life of the community;
- Encourage the development of a broad array of community parks, public spaces, and recreational facilities; and
- Enable the public to have meaningful and appropriate opportunities to participate in the planning process.

The policies outline the community’s future work plan priorities, which include the development of land development code standards, creation of park master plans, and review of development proposals. As a result of this plan update, the Estero community has developed a planning framework that guides how the community will change and develop in the future.

### **Estero Vision Statement**

*To establish a community that embraces its historic heritage and protects the environment, while carefully planning for future development resulting from a desirable high quality of life, expanding economic opportunities, and proximity to Florida Gulf Coast University and the Southwest Florida International Airport. Estero's growth will be planned as a village—with strong neighborhoods, diverse economic generators, interconnected mixed-use centers, varied parks, public spaces, recreational facilities, and unique natural environments that fosters a sense of belonging and creates a sense of place. Estero will be a highly valued place to live, work, and visit because of development standards and design guidelines that promote: 1) desirable neighborhoods and public amenities; 2) vibrant economic centers; 3) attractive landscaping, streetscaping, lighting, signage, and architectural features; and 4) an interconnected transportation network, while limiting strip commercial centers as well as certain undesired commercial uses. The implementation of this vision will successfully link residential and commercial areas and uphold Estero as a vibrant Lee County community.*

Staff finds that the updated Estero vision statement and guiding principles articulate results of the 2014 Estero Plan. The revisions clarify that the community’s vision extends to the commercial, economic, residential, and public resources within the Estero community. As a result, staff finds that the revised vision and guiding principles will enable Estero to preserve and protect its unique historical, architectural, and community character through its future planning and development efforts.



**Future Land Use, Estero GOAL 19:** *Promote the development of Estero as a community with a unique quality of life, distinct character, and diverse housing, economic, recreational, and social opportunities by:*

- a. Protecting the natural resources, environment, and lifestyle;*
- b. Establishing minimum aesthetic and design requirements;*
- c. Managing the type, location, quality, design and intensity of future land uses;*
- d. Providing greater opportunities for public participation in the land development approval process; and*
- e. Promoting a true sense of place in Estero.*

Staff finds that Estero Goal 19, which has been written to replace the existing Goal 19, will enable Estero to establish a framework through which the community becomes a complete place with diverse opportunities to live, work, and play in a well connected and uniquely defined place. Through the revised Goal 19 and the associated objectives and policies, Estero has established a work plan which will guide the community's future development practices and priorities.

**Future Land Use, Estero Objective 19.1: Estero Character and Land Use**

*OBJECTIVE 19.1: Estero will promote its community character through the implementation of planning and development practices that create a visually attractive community, an enhanced quality of life, and foster a unique sense of place.*

*POLICY 19.1.1: Support the unique character and quality of life within Estero by working with Lee County to manage growth and development and by maintaining, drafting, updating and executing Lee Plan policies, Land Development Code (LDC) regulations, and other planning tools that:*

- a. Implement and maintain development standards for architecture, landscaping, buffering, signage, lighting designs and visual appearance of developments, transportation facilities, and other community amenities;*
- b. Promote the use of low impact design, sustainable energy, water, and other environmental features;*
- c. Establish higher density, mixed-use development within areas targeted on the Mixed-Use Overlay;*
- d. Encourage the redevelopment and infill of underutilized commercial and residential lands; and*
- e. Enable the community to increase public participation in the land development approval process to ensure future development efforts support the Estero community plan and adopted Lee Plan policies and LDC standards.*

*POLICY 19.1.2: Lee County is discouraged from approving any proposed project that does not adhere to Estero's Lee Plan policies and LDC standards unless there is a demonstration of (a) community benefit or (b) attainment of other goals or policies of the Estero community*

*plan. Such projects will be reviewed through a collaborative process that includes the Estero community, property owner, and Lee County staff to ensure that the development supports and upholds the community's plan and vision.*

*POLICY 19.1.3: Encourage new developments that achieve the Estero community's vision and planning goal and policies and meet specific smart growth oriented, mixed-use design, architectural, location, connectivity and public access standards by working with Lee County to establish and implement development incentives that:*

- a. Promote urban integrated forms of development in targeted areas identified on the Mixed-Use Overlay;*
- b. Promote targeted industries in appropriate areas of Estero—e.g.: healthcare, arts and culture, technology, and research and development facilities;*
- c. Promote the use of green design, sustainable energy, water, and other environmental features;*
- d. Expedite and streamline desired development projects—particularly in targeted incentive zones where the community has adopted mixed-use plans and LDC standards;*
- e. Enable infill of underutilized commercial and residential lands; and*
- f. Encourage residential developments to use the bonus density established through the Lee Plan Urban land use categories.*

*POLICY 19.1.4: Facilitate the redevelopment of properties constructed prior to the adoption of Estero Lee Plan policies and LDC regulations by:*

- a. Establishing incentives and streamlined development processes that enables older properties to come into compliance with adopted Lee Plan policies and LDC standards.*
- b. Working with property owners and developers to utilize incentives and streamlined review processes to redevelop their properties; and*
- c. Encouraging property owners to redevelop their properties utilizing Bonus Densities established through the Lee Plan Urban land use categories.*

*POLICY 19.1.5: Recognize the unique historical and cultural values of the Estero Community by:*

- a. Encouraging the development of the Old Estero area into a mixed-use center;*
- b. Diversifying the architectural character of Estero by incorporating design features of Estero's historic structures into future architectural design, streetscape, and community LDC standards; and*
- c. Identifying, protecting, and promoting historic resources and facilities such as those related to Koreshan Park, Old Estero area, and the Estero Community Park.*

*POLICY 19.1.6: Establish and promote Estero's unique character and identity by defining the community's boundaries through the use of gateway entry features such as ornamental landscape features, hardscape elements and Estero identification signs. Ensure the gateways are constructed by working with Lee County, the Florida Department of Transportation and private property owners to build the gateways at appropriate locations.*

*POLICY 19.1.7: Identify, prioritize, and fund local capital improvement projects (particularly projects that enhance transportation and infrastructure systems) within the Estero community by working with Lee County to explore local, dedicated funding options—e.g.: MSBU, Tax Increment Finance District, or other similar mechanism. Capital projects that should be targeted for such funding include:*

- a. Streetscape improvements such as roadway pavers, street furniture, street signs and lighting, trash receptacles, and other hardscape features—particularly in Old Estero and within new mixed-use centers;*
- b. Pedestrian scale lighting;*
- c. Landscaping and hardscape features—particularly along US 41;*
- d. Public trails and greenways facilities;*
- e. Blue way facilities that provide public access to Estero River;*
- f. Multi-modal transportation facilities that expand or establish pedestrian, bike, transit, and rail services;*
- g. Public space, park, and recreational facilities;*
- h. Urban level infrastructure services and systems within mixed-use center areas; and*
- i. Historic resources and facilities such as those associated with the Koreshan Park and Estero Community Park.*

Staff finds that this objective and policy series is critical to enabling the community to achieve its vision and goal as it outlines the community future planning framework. The policies accomplish this task by establishing the primary development, land use, and future planning priorities. Specific issues addressed through this objective and policy include: identification of priorities related to the Estero mixed-use centers, architectural and community character features, and development and implementation of land development standards. These issues are essential to establishing a planning framework that sustains the community's distinct character, supports a community town center, diversify its economy, and protects its natural resources. As such, they enable the community to address issues and concerns that are unique to Estero.

### **Future Land Use, Estero Objective 19.2: Estero Mixed-Use Centers and Economic Areas**

*OBJECTIVE 19.2: Promote Estero's quality of life and diverse local economy by fostering the development of mixed-use centers and targeted economic areas. The aim of the mixed-*

*use centers is to provide Estero with central gathering places for Estero’s residents, business people, and visitors. The aim of the economic areas is to provide the community a diverse employment and economic base while meeting the commercial, professional, and service needs of the people who live, work, and play within the community.*

*POLICY 19.2.1: Provide for the development of walkable mixed-use town centers and economic areas featuring diverse housing options; government offices and public facilities; medical facilities; employment centers; public gathering places, parks, outdoor plazas, and other public spaces; greenway trails and pathways; and public access to the community’s natural resources through Lee Plan policies and LDC regulations that support Estero’s distinct community character and adhere to the following community priorities:*

- a. Support the development of a central town center to unify the community;*
- b. Improve the connectivity between Estero’s residential neighborhoods, economic areas, civic uses, and park and recreational facilities;*
- c. Diversify the community’s economic base and employment opportunities;*
- d. Encourage the development of targeted industry clusters—particularly health industries, professional services and businesses, and technology, research, and development;*
- e. Expand multi-modal transportation options through improved pedestrian access, bikeways, transit service, and rail opportunities;*
- f. Improve access to the community’s blueways—particularly the Estero river—, greenway trails, other open spaces;*
- g. Promote the community’s cultural and historic resources; public spaces, parks, and recreational facilities; and other community amenities;*
- h. Maintain a unified and pleasing aesthetic/visual quality in landscaping, architecture, lighting, and signage; and*
- i. Promote and incentivize private investment within mixed-use centers and economic areas.*

*POLICY 19.2.2: Facilitate the development of a town center for the Estero community through the development of LDC standards, plans, and incentives that address the community’s need for a central civic and economic core that is connected to surrounding residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and community park and recreational facilities.*

*POLICY 19.2.3: Establish a safe and desirable urban environment within the Estero community by adopting Lee Plan policies and LDC standards that guide development in the community’s major economic areas near FGCU, along the U.S. 41 corridor, along Corkscrew Road, and in the Old Estero area that:*

- a. *Address streetscaping design and amenities, residential buffering standards, commercial center developments, signage, transportation facility needs, and other community concerns;*
- b. *Provide for the economic and employment needs of the Estero community by utilizing the Mixed-Use Overlay to facilitate the development of mixed-use centers along the US 41, Corkscrew Road, Three Oaks Parkway, Ben Hill Griffin Parkway, Via Coconut/Sandy Lane, and in the Old Estero area; and*
- c. *Discourage stand alone commercial retail in favor of mixed-use centers at these locations.*

*POLICY 19.2.4: Ensure that future commercial and mixed-use developments meet the community's planning priorities by requiring that all new commercial development which requires rezoning within Estero must be reviewed as a Commercial (CPD), Mixed Use (MPD), or Compact Communities Planned Development (CCPD).*

*POLICY 19.2.5: Support the development of mixed-use centers by enabling nightclub, bar, and cocktail lounges within mixed-use centers developed through the CCPD or MPD of a DRI to be considered through a public review process that receives significant community support. The specific location of these uses are to be designed as part of an overall development project and placed within the project so that it 1) supports and is supported by other entertainment and restaurant establishments and 2) is placed near the physical center of the mixed-use development project. Except as set forth above in this policy, the following uses are prohibited within Estero: any detrimental use (as defined in the LDC); nightclubs or bar and cocktail lounges not associated with a group III restaurant; tattoo parlors, and retail uses that require outdoor display in excess of one acre. Outdoor display in excess of one acre is permitted within the property located in the Interchange Land Use Category west of I-75, south of Corkscrew Road, and east of Corkscrew Woodlands Boulevard.*

*POLICY 19.2.6: Encourage the development of medical related uses within Estero by working with Lee County and private property owners to adopt appropriate land use policies, land development standards, identify appropriate sites and locations, and establish incentives for the development of health related facilities. Particular emphasis will focus on establishing a medical economic center in the southern section of Estero along U.S. 41.*

*POLICY 19.2.7: Facilitate the development of professional, and research and development economic areas by working with Lee County and private property owners to adopt appropriate land use policies, land development standards, identify appropriate sites and locations, and establish incentives for the development of professional and research and development facilities. Particular emphasis shall be on locating such facilities in areas that take advantage of FGCU educational resources and high technology facilities.*

Staff finds that this objective and policy set fulfills the Estero vision by guiding future economic development practices, establishing the community's goal of developing of mixed-use centers, and encouraging a more diverse array of economic areas. The work plan, which is to be implemented through the update of the community's land development regulations, includes the following community planning efforts: the establishment of land development code and design standards for the development of mixed-use centers, identification of targeted areas for future mixed-use centers, direction about how future economic areas are to be planned and developed, and recognition of the value of medical and professional, research and development uses to the community's future.

### **Future Land Use, Estero Objective 19.3: Estero Residential Neighborhoods**

*OBJECTIVE 19.3: Support Estero's quality of life, promote the community's unique character through the development of diverse, well-designed, and well-connected residential neighborhoods, and provide for the needs of multigenerational community by supporting a variety of housing types and neighborhood development forms.*

*POLICY 19.3.1: Support and enhance the Estero's residential character by strictly evaluating how the proposed residential neighborhoods:*

- a. Relate to adjacent uses, public facilities, and infrastructure systems;*
- b. Impact surrounding environmental and natural resources;*
- c. Access nearby parks, public spaces, recreational facilities, and greenways, blueways, and natural open spaces;*
- d. Connect to adjacent residential developments, mixed-use centers, economic areas, public facilities, and community resources; and*
- e. Contribute to the overall design, landscaping, and aesthetics that make up the community's built environment.*

*POLICY 19.3.2: Meet the future needs of Florida Gulf Coast University by encouraging higher density residential developments, with a mix of unit types and design forms, including affordable housing and mixed-use centers, in close proximity to Florida Gulf Coast University. The development of such housing and mixed-use centers will consider the transitions between the adjacent residential neighborhoods, commercial centers, and park and recreational facilities.*

*POLICY 19.3.3: Maintain a well-designed and landscaped community while providing appropriate transitions between residential uses and surrounding areas by establishing LDC landscaping requirements consistent with, and appropriate to, adjacent uses. Such landscaping requirements may be greater between residential and commercial uses, while less stringent within differing uses within a mixed-use center.*

Staff finds that this set of objective and policies effectively articulates how the community will support, maintain, and develop its residential neighborhoods. While based upon the objectives and policies established by the 2002 Estero Plan, these policies better define the community's desired to diversify, connect, and landscape residential areas. One of the primary components of this set of policies is the idea that the residential neighborhoods will promote a better interconnected, walkable community, with a unique character and design that is supportive of Estero's distinct character.

#### **Future Land Use, Estero Objective 19.4: Estero Connectivity and Mobility**

*OBJECTIVE 19.4: Facilitate the development of an interconnected, well linked community that enables people to easily access Estero's neighborhoods, commercial and mixed-use centers as well as other areas within the county and region through an integrated transportation and mobility system.*

*POLICY 19.4.1: Establish land development code standards that ensure the development of a well connected transportation system that includes pedestrian pathways, bikeways, transit, and roadways by encouraging private developments to:*

- a. Provide interconnects with adjacent uses;*
- b. Minimize access points onto primary road corridors by providing multiple access to adjacent properties;*
- c. Link neighborhoods, commercial and mixed-use centers, public facilities, and parks; and*
- d. Enable multi-modal transportation access (pedestrian, bike, vehicular, and transit) within and between the different neighborhoods, economic and employment centers, civic uses, and public space, park, and recreational facilities within the Estero Community.*

*POLICY 19.4.2: Support the efforts to establish an active passenger rail corridor along the existing rail line that passes through Estero in order to provide alternate modes of transportation linking Estero to Naples in the south and to Fort Myers and Punta Gorda in the north. Additionally, while planning continues with respect to the development of such passenger rail service, Estero strongly supports the efforts of Lee County to establish a rails with trails corridor.*

*POLICY 19.4.3: Expand Estero's transportation network of pedestrian and bicycle pathways, sidewalks, trails, and other facilities by working with Lee County, State of Florida, and other local, state, and regional entities to:*

- a. Construct multi-use pathways that feature shade trees, benches, bike racks, and other design elements to attract usage;*
- b. Identify targeted funding sources including development contributions, private donations, public funding sources (e.g.: MSBU), or other mechanisms;*

- c. *Implement the greenways master plan within the Estero community by working with Lee County Parks Department;*
- d. *Utilize the FP&L right of way within Estero State Buffer Preserve by working with FP&L and Lee County;*
- e. *Establish a pedestrian–bike trail within or along the rail right of way for public recreation by working with the existing rail corridor and private developers; and*
- f. *Encourage the development of an effective rail system by working with the existing rail corridor to improve and expand use of existing rail facilities.*

*POLICY 19.4.4: All public and private rights of way within future mixed-use centers and the Old Estero area are encouraged to be designed to include pedestrian ways, cross walks and traffic calming measures including, where appropriate, on-street parking, raised crosswalks, narrow lane widths or other similar mechanisms.*

*POLICY 19.4.5: Provide for well designed, safe, and multi-use transportation corridors by establishing, maintaining, and implementing complete street design guidelines for the major roadways within Estero including the US 41, Corkscrew Road, Via Coconut/Sandy Lane, and Three Oaks Parkway. In design, address roadway and median landscape standards, access management guidelines, signage, street lighting, and sidewalks to ensure safe and effective pedestrian crossings within the context of a comprehensive pedestrian and bikeway system.*

*POLICY 19.4.6: Address regional transportation demands and considerations by proactively working with Lee County, private developers, and the applicable advisory boards to Lee County to improve transportation connectivity and mobility throughout Estero and to other communities.*

Staff finds that this objective and policy set supports the proposed planning framework for a better integrated Estero’s residential neighborhoods, economic areas, mixed-use centers, public facilities, and community parks by promoting a well connected multi-modal transportation system. The policies proposed through this objective set address the need to base the area’s transportation resource upon the context within which the resource must function—whether it be a mixed-use town center area, commercial corridor, multi-purpose path, or residential roadway.

**Future Land Use, Estero Objective 19.5: Estero Natural Resources and Environment**

*OBJECTIVE 19.5: Ensure that Estero’s natural environment enhances the character and quality of life of the community by protecting the natural resources of Estero, promoting the area’s natural environment to visitors and residents, and supporting public access to greenway and waterfront areas.*



*POLICY 19.5.1: Protect the natural environment and resources of Estero by working with Lee County to maintain, amend, and implement Lee Plan or LDC regulations that:*

- a. Protect the quality and prevent degrading of Estero's natural environment, native species and habitats, and ecological resources; and;*
- b. Ensure new development provides public access to Estero waterways and greenways, as appropriate. Particular emphasis shall be given to properties along Estero River, its tributaries, and any Estero open spaces;*
- c. Incentivize the protection of Estero's natural resources—e.g.: wetlands, uplands, historic flow ways, native habitat, or other ecological resources; and*
- d. Require all new developments adjacent to Estero River or its tributaries to incorporate design techniques that protect the river's water quality through improved runoff or stormwater discharge practices. These techniques may include: the preservation of wetland areas, the incorporation of Low Impact Development techniques, or other surface water quality enhancement technologies.*

*POLICY 19.5.2: Estero will work with Lee County, private property owners, and developers to improve public access, use, and enjoyment of Estero's waterfront and water-based resources by creating community water-based amenities such as Estero Bay water taxi, marina facilities, or other water-dependent facilities.*

*POLICY 19.5.3: Support the long term protection of Estero's environment and natural resources by working with Lee County and other local, regional, state, and national agencies and organizations to identify and preserve natural resources and the environment.*

*POLICY 19.5.4: The Estero Community attaches great importance to the integrity of Lee County provisions in the Lee Plan and the Land Development Code with respect to the Density Reduction/Groundwater Resource Area (DR/GR) in so far as actions with respect to the DR/GR have an impact on the environment, natural resources, mobility, sense of place, and character of Estero. Accordingly, the Estero Community urges Lee County in its regulations, policies, and actions to protect the Estero Community from any adverse impacts in this regard.*

Staff finds that this objective and policy set addresses specific Estero community concerns related to the use and protection of the area's vital natural resources. The objective confirms the community's desire to enforce already established environmentally sustainable development practices, land conservation programs, water resource development requirements, and environmental areas. However, staff also recognizes that the parameters of such policies will have to be further refined and analyzed through the land development code. Additionally, the Estero community will have to work closely with local, regional, and

state natural resource agencies to fully implement their previously established natural resource regulations and standards.

**Future Land Use, Estero Objective 19.6: Estero Public Spaces, Parks, and Recreational Facilities**

*OBJECTIVE 19.6: Support Estero's quality of life through the development of a broad array of community parks, public spaces, and recreational facilities.*

*POLICY 19.6.1: Promote the development of a variety of public spaces, park, and recreational facilities within Estero by collaborating with Lee County, State of Florida, private developers and other local, state, and national organizations on the development of active and passive public resources and facilities.*

*POLICY 19.6.2: Expand the use, variety, and type of public spaces, parks, and recreational facilities within Estero by working with private developments to provide linkages, access, public parks, public space, and recreational amenities through the use of incentives, LDC requirements, and other development tools.*

*POLICY 19.6.3: Promote Estero Community Park as a hub for the entire community by utilizing park areas to link neighborhoods, commercial and mixed-use centers, and other open space and recreational facilities through an integrated system of bike, pedestrian, and roadways connections.*

*POLICY 19.6.4: Integrate the Koreshan State Historic Site into the fabric of the community by collaborating with the State of Florida, Lee County, and the Estero Community to improve the area's landscaping, enhance pedestrian and bicycle access, historic resources and structures, and community park program and activities.*

*POLICY 19.6.5: Provide passive recreational opportunities within Estero State Buffer Preserve, Estero River, and Estero Bay by collaborating with the State of Florida, Lee County, private property owners, and the Estero community to ensure the community's parks, natural amenities, and open spaces have easy access, parking, trails, and other community amenities.*

Staff finds that by establishing guidelines for the use, planning, and development of Estero's public spaces, parks, and recreational facilities this objective and policy set supports the intended vision statements for the Estero community. Specifically, the policies consider the community's intention to link public facilities and community parks to neighborhoods; provide public access to community assets and public spaces; and promote coordination with

local, regional, and state agencies regarding community parks, natural amenities, and open spaces.

### **Future Land Use, Estero Objective 19.7: Estero Public Participation**

***OBJECTIVE 19.7:** Ensure the public has meaningful and appropriate opportunities to participate in and comment upon development in and around the Estero community.*

***POLICY 19.7.1:** As a courtesy, Lee County will register citizen groups and civic organizations within the Estero community planning area that desire notification of pending review of Land Development Code amendments and Lee Plan amendments. Upon registration, Lee County will provide registered groups with documentation regarding these 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, or failure of a group to receive mailed notice, will not constitute a defect in notice or bar a public hearing from occurring as scheduled.*

***POLICY 19.7.2:** The Estero Community will establish an online document clearing house for their community, where copies of selected zoning submittal documents, staff reports, Hearing Examiner recommendations, and resolutions will be provided for public inspection. The county's failure to provide or to timely provide documents to the online document clearing house, or failure of the online document clearing house to receive documents, will not constitute a defect in notice or bar a public hearing from occurring as scheduled.*

***POLICY 19.7.3:** The owner or agent applying for Planned Developments, Rezoning, Variances, Special Exceptions, Plan Amendments, Administrative Amendments, Development Orders and Limited Development Orders for county approval within the Estero Community must conduct one public informational session within the community in a publicly owned or leased facility where the agent will provide a general overview of the project for any interested citizens. Lee County encourages planning, zoning, and/or development services staff to participate at such public meetings. This meeting must be conducted before the application can be found sufficient. The applicant is fully responsible for providing the meeting space, providing advance notice of the meeting place, time and date and providing security measures as needed. 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. If the applicant chooses to hold the public meeting before any established community groups, then the minutes of that meeting as may be applicable must be provided prior to a finding of sufficiency.*

Staff finds that this objective and policy set confirms the Estero community's intention to encourage public participation in all of its community planning activities in order that all community stakeholders—citizens, business people, land owners, and other interested parties—may take ownership of their community's future. This set of objectives and policies is similar to the practices established in Lee County's other community plans.

### **C. CONCLUSIONS**

The *Estero Community Plan* establishes a sound planning framework for the future of Estero. The visions, goals, objectives, and policies established in this plan identifies and addresses a number of challenges and opportunities. The plan establishes a foundation for future community development and planning in Estero.

### **D. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Board of County Commissioners *transmit* the proposed amendments to the Estero Goal.

**PART III - LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY  
REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION**

DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING: APRIL 28, 2014

**A. LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY REVIEW**

**B. LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY RECOMMENDATION AND FINDINGS OF  
FACT SUMMARY**

**1. RECOMMENDATION:**

**2. BASIS AND RECOMMENDED FINDINGS OF FACT:**

**E. VOTE:**

<b>NOEL ANDRESS</b>	_____
<b>DENNIS CHURCH</b>	_____
<b>JIM GREEN</b>	_____
<b>MITCH HUTCHCRAFT</b>	_____
<b>JAMES INK</b>	_____
<b>RICK JOYCE</b>	_____
<b>DAVID MULICKA</b>	_____

## APPENDIX A

### Future Land Use, Estero Goal 19

~~To establish a community that embraces its historic heritage, while carefully planning for future growth resulting from Florida Gulf Coast University, the Southwest Florida International Airport, growing population and a unique natural environment. Estero's growth will be planned as a village, establishing defined areas for tasteful shopping, service, and entertainment, while protecting and encouraging residential neighborhoods that encourage a sense of belonging. Weaving the community together will be carefully crafted limitations on strip commercial uses, inappropriate signage, and certain undesired commercial uses, while additional design guidelines will be established to ensure attractive landscaping, streetscaping, architectural standards, and unified access points. The implementation of this vision will help reduce the conflict between residential and commercial areas, as well as allow Estero to emerge as a vibrant Lee County Village.~~

~~**GOAL 19: ESTERO.** To protect the character, natural resources and quality of life in Estero by establishing minimum aesthetic requirements, managing the location and intensity of future commercial and residential uses, and providing greater opportunities for public participation in the land development approval process. This Goal and subsequent objectives and policies apply to the Estero Planning Community as depicted on Map 16. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)~~

~~**OBJECTIVE 19.1: COMMUNITY CHARACTER.** The Estero Community will draft and submit regulations, policies and discretionary actions affecting the character and aesthetic appearance of Estero for Lee County to adopt and enforce to help create a visually attractive community. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)~~

~~**POLICY 19.1.1:** By the end of 2002, The Estero Community will draft and submit regulations or policies for Lee County to review, amend or establish as Land Development Code regulations that provide for enhanced landscaping along roadway corridors, greater buffering, shading of parking areas, signage and lighting consistent with the Community Vision, and architectural standards. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)~~

~~**POLICY 19.1.2:** Lee County is discouraged from approving any deviation that would result in a reduction of landscaping, buffering, signage guidelines or compliance with architectural standards. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)~~

**POLICY 19.1.3:** Lee County will work, through the permitting process, with private property owners to establish incentives for voluntarily bringing older projects into compliance with the regulations adopted as a result of the Estero Community Plan. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**POLICY 19.1.4:** The Estero Community will work in conjunction with private developers, public agencies and community service providers to establish one or several town commons that encourage the location of a post office, public meeting hall, outdoor plaza, governmental offices, medical providers and recreational opportunities. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**POLICY 19.1.5:** By 2002, the Estero Community will draft a corridor management plan for the Estero US 41 corridor to advance development in a manner that promotes a safe, high quality urban environment. Plan elements will include roadway and median landscape standards, residential buffering standards, access management guidelines, street lighting, sidewalks, and insuring safe and effective pedestrian crossings within the context of a comprehensive pedestrian and bikeway system. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**POLICY 19.1.6:** By 2004 Lee County will evaluate historic resources, and draft a proposal for their designation under Chapter 22 of the Land Development Code. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**OBJECTIVE 19.2: COMMERCIAL LAND USES.** Existing and future County regulations, land use interpretations, policies, zoning approvals, and administrative actions must recognize the unique conditions and preferences of the Estero Community to ensure that commercial areas maintain a unified and pleasing aesthetic/visual quality in landscaping, architecture, lighting and signage, and provide for employment opportunities, while discouraging uses that are not compatible with adjacent uses and have significant adverse impacts on natural resources. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**POLICY 19.2.1:** All new commercial development that requires rezoning within the Estero Planning Community must be reviewed as a Commercial Planned Development. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**POLICY 19.2.2:** All retail uses must be in compliance with the Commercial Site Location Standards. A finding of a "Special Case" must demonstrate a community benefit in addition to the requirements outlined in Policy 6.12(8). (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**POLICY 19.2.3:** By the end of 2002 the Estero Community will submit regulations that encourage mixed use developments along Corkscrew Road for Lee County to review, amend or adopt. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**POLICY 19.2.4:** ~~With the exception of the Commercial Nodes identified on Map 19, Lee County will discourage new retail uses along Three Oaks Parkway, in favor of office and residential uses. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)~~

**POLICY 19.2.5:** ~~The following uses are prohibited within the Estero Planning Community: "detrimental uses" (as defined in the Land Development Code); nightclubs or bar and cocktail lounges not associated with a Group III Restaurant; and retail uses that require outdoor display in excess of one acre. Outdoor display in excess of one acre is permitted within the property located in the General Interchange Future Land Use Category west of I-75, south of Corkscrew Road, and east of Corkscrew Woodlands Boulevard. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05, Amended by Ordinance No. 05-19)~~

**POLICY 19.2.6:** ~~Lee County encourages commercial developments within the Estero Planning Community to provide interconnect opportunities with adjacent commercial uses in order to minimize access points onto primary road corridors; and residential developments to provide interconnect opportunities with commercial areas, including but not limited to bike paths and pedestrian access ways. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)~~

**OBJECTIVE 19.3: RESIDENTIAL USES.** ~~Lee County must protect and enhance the residential character of the Estero Planning Community by strictly evaluating adjacent uses, natural resources, access and recreational or open space, and requiring compliance with enhanced buffering requirements. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)~~

**POLICY 19.3.1:** ~~In order to meet the future needs of Florida Gulf Coast University, Lee County encourages higher density residential developments, with a mix of unit types, including affordable housing, in close proximity to Florida Gulf Coast University, between Three Oaks Parkway and I-75. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)~~

**POLICY 19.3.2:** ~~By the end of 2002, The Estero Community will draft and submit regulations and policies for Lee County to review, amend or adopt as regulations in the Land Development Code to provide for greater buffering between distinctly different adjacent commercial and residential properties, modified however when a project is of mixed-use nature. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)~~

**POLICY 19.3.3:** ~~Lee County will protect the large lot residential areas between Koreshan Parkway and Corkscrew Road by requiring significant buffers between existing lots and higher density residential developments, and/or the placement of transitional density to adjacent units between the uses. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)~~



**OBJECTIVE 19.4: NATURAL RESOURCES.** County regulations, policies, and discretionary actions affecting Estero must protect or enhance key wetland or native upland habitats. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**POLICY 19.4.1:** By the end of 2003, Lee County will review, amend or adopt Lee Plan or Land Development Code regulations to provide the following:

- All future development proposals adjacent to the Estero River or its tributaries must include floodplain protection plans prior to zoning approval.
- All new developments adjacent to the Estero River or its tributaries must provide an additional buffer which preserves all of the native vegetation within that buffer, adjacent to the top of bank, with the exception of passive recreational uses. This is intended to prevent degradation of water quality within these natural water bodies.
- Lee County will encourage on-site preservation of indigenous plant communities and listed species habitat. When site constraints are such that off-site mitigation of indigenous areas is deemed necessary, the mitigation will be of similar habitat, provided whenever possible, within one mile of the Estero Fire District Boundary.
- Lee County will provide significant incentives (for example increased density, Transfer of Development Rights, etc) for the protection of wetlands, historic flow ways, native habitat or other significant natural resources within the Estero Planning Community. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**POLICY 19.4.2:** Lee County, or another authorized agency, will work to provide alternative irrigation sources (re-use, Aquifer Storage and Recovery Water, or mixed non-potable) or financial incentives to provide non-potable water to uses within the Estero Community. This is desired to discourage the proliferation of private, single-user wells. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**POLICY 19.4.3:** Lee County will continue to enforce wellfield protection requirements, monitoring, and other applicable provisions to ensure that future wellfield drawdown zones are protected. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**OBJECTIVE 19.5: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.** Lee County will encourage and solicit public input and participation prior to and during the review and adoption of county regulations, Land Development Code provisions, Lee Plan provisions, and zoning approvals. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**POLICY 19.5.1:** As a courtesy, Lee County will register citizen groups and civic organizations within the Estero Planning Community that desire notification of pending review of Land Development Code amendments and Lee Plan amendments. Upon registration, Lee County will provide registered groups with documentation regarding these 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, or failure of a group to receive mailed notice, will not constitute a defect in notice or bar a public hearing from occurring as scheduled. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**POLICY 19.5.2:** The Estero Community will establish a "document clearing house" in Estero, where copies of selected zoning submittal documents, staff reports, Hearing Examiner recommendations and resolutions will be provided 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. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**POLICY 19.5.3:** The owner or agent for any Planned Development request within the Estero Planning Community must conduct one public informational session where the agent will provide a general overview of the project for any interested citizens. Lee County encourages zoning staff to participate in such public workshops. This meeting must be conducted before the application can be found sufficient. The applicant is fully responsible for providing the meeting space and providing security measures as needed. 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. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**OBJECTIVE 19.6: COMMUNITY FACILITIES.** Lee County will work with the Estero Community to provide or facilitate the provision of a broad mix of Community Facilities. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**POLICY 19.6.1:** The Estero Community will work with the State of Florida to provide appropriate passive recreational opportunities within the Estero Scrub Preserve, potentially enhanced by a public/private partnership. This should include easy access, parking, trails, and other non-intrusive uses. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**POLICY 19.6.2:** The Estero Community will work with the State of Florida to encourage the integration of the Koreshan State Historic Site into the fabric of the community. This may include landscaping, aesthetically pleasing archways along US 41, the provision of a "gateway" at US 41 and Corkscrew Road, enhanced pedestrian and bicycle access, or programmed activities for the community. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**POLICY 19.6.3:** Lee County will work with the community and private landowners to identify opportunities to maintain public access to the Estero River and Estero Bay. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

**POLICY 19.6.4:** Lee County will work with the community to ensure that the development of the Estero Bonita Springs Community Park is integrated into the surrounding development and open space areas. 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. (Added by Ordinance No. 02-05)

## **ESTERO COMMUNITY PLAN**

**ESTERO VISION:** To establish a community that embraces its historic heritage and protects the environment, while carefully planning for future development resulting from a desirable high quality of life, expanding economic opportunities, and proximity to Florida Gulf Coast University and the Southwest Florida International Airport. Estero's growth will be planned as a village—with strong neighborhoods, diverse economic generators, interconnected mixed-use centers, varied parks, public spaces, recreational facilities, and unique natural environments that fosters a sense of belonging and creates a sense of place. Estero will be a highly valued place to live, work, and visit because of development standards and design guidelines that promote: 1) desirable neighborhoods and public amenities; 2) vibrant economic centers; 3) attractive landscaping, streetscaping, lighting, signage, and architectural features; and 4) an interconnected transportation network, while limiting strip commercial centers as well as certain undesired commercial uses. The implementation of this vision will successfully link residential and commercial areas and uphold Estero as a vibrant Lee County community.

**GOAL 19:** Promote the development of Estero as a community with a unique quality of life, distinct character, and diverse housing, economic, recreational, and social opportunities by:

- a. Protecting the natural resources, environment, and lifestyle;
- b. Establishing minimum aesthetic and design requirements;
- c. Managing the type, location, quality, design and intensity of future land uses;
- d. Providing greater opportunities for public participation in the land development approval process; and
- e. Promoting a true sense of place in Estero.

## **ESTERO CHARACTER & LAND USE**

**OBJECTIVE 19.1:** Estero will promote its community character through the implementation of planning and development practices that create a visually attractive community, an enhanced quality of life, and foster a unique sense of place.

**POLICY 19.1.1:** Support the unique character and quality of life within Estero by working with Lee County to manage growth and development and by maintaining, drafting, updating and

executing Lee Plan policies, Land Development Code (LDC) regulations, and other planning tools that:

- a. Implement and maintain development standards for architecture, landscaping, buffering, signage, lighting designs and visual appearance of developments, transportation facilities, and other community amenities;
- b. Promote the use of low impact design, sustainable energy, water, and other environmental features;
- c. Establish higher density, mixed-use development within areas targeted on the Mixed-Use Overlay;
- d. Encourage the redevelopment and infill of underutilized commercial and residential lands; and
- e. Enable the community to increase public participation in the land development approval process to ensure future development efforts support the Estero community plan and adopted Lee Plan policies and LDC standards.

POLICY 19.1.2: Lee County is discouraged from approving any proposed project that does not adhere to Estero’s Lee Plan policies and LDC standards unless there is a demonstration of (a) community benefit or (b) attainment of other goals or policies of the Estero community plan. Such projects will be reviewed through a collaborative process that includes the Estero community, property owner, and Lee County staff to ensure that the development supports and upholds the community’s plan and vision.

POLICY 19.1.3: Encourage new developments that achieve the Estero community’s vision and planning goal and policies and meet specific smart growth oriented, mixed-use design, architectural, location, connectivity and public access standards by working with Lee County to establish and implement development incentives that:

- a. Promote urban integrated forms of development in targeted areas identified on the Mixed-Use Overlay;
- b. Promote targeted industries in appropriate areas of Estero—e.g.: healthcare, arts and culture, technology, and research and development facilities;
- c. Promote the use of green design, sustainable energy, water, and other environmental features;
- d. Expedite and streamline desired development projects—particularly in targeted incentive zones where the community has adopted mixed-use plans and LDC standards;
- e. Enable infill of underutilized commercial and residential lands; and
- f. Encourage residential developments to use the bonus density established through the Lee Plan Urban land use categories.

POLICY 19.1.4: Facilitate the redevelopment of properties constructed prior to the adoption of Estero Lee Plan policies and LDC regulations by:

- a. Establishing incentives and streamlined development processes that enables older properties to come into compliance with adopted Lee Plan policies and LDC standards.
- b. Working with property owners and developers to utilize incentives and streamlined review processes to redevelop their properties; and
- c. Encouraging property owners to redevelop their properties utilizing Bonus Densities established through the Lee Plan Urban land use categories.

POLICY 19.1.5: Recognize the unique historical and cultural values of the Estero Community by:

- a. Encouraging the development of the Old Estero area into a mixed-use center;
- b. Diversifying the architectural character of Estero by incorporating design features of Estero's historic structures into future architectural design, streetscape, and community LDC standards; and
- c. Identifying, protecting, and promoting historic resources and facilities such as those related to Koreshan Park, Old Estero area, and the Estero Community Park.

POLICY 19.1.6: Establish and promote Estero's unique character and identity by defining the community's boundaries through the use of gateway entry features such as ornamental landscape features, hardscape elements and Estero identification signs. Ensure the gateways are constructed by working with Lee County, the Florida Department of Transportation and private property owners to build the gateways at appropriate locations.

POLICY 19.1.7: Identify, prioritize, and fund local capital improvement projects (particularly projects that enhance transportation and infrastructure systems) within the Estero community by working with Lee County to explore local, dedicated funding options—e.g.: MSBU, Tax Increment Finance District, or other similar mechanism. Capital projects that should be targeted for such funding include:

- b. Streetscape improvements such as roadway pavers, street furniture, street signs and lighting, trash receptacles, and other hardscape features—particularly in Old Estero and within new mixed-use centers;
- c. Pedestrian scale lighting;
- d. Landscaping and hardscape features—particularly along US 41;
- e. Public trails and greenways facilities;
- f. Blue way facilities that provide public access to Estero River;
- g. Multi-modal transportation facilities that expand or establish pedestrian, bike, transit, and rail services;
- h. Public space, park, and recreational facilities;

- i. Urban level infrastructure services and systems within mixed-use center areas; and
- j. Historic resources and facilities such as those associated with the Koreshan Park and Estero Community Park.

## **ESTERO MIXED-USE CENTERS AND ECONOMIC AREAS**

OBJECTIVE 19.2: Promote Estero’s quality of life and diverse local economy by fostering the development of mixed-use centers and targeted economic areas. The aim of the mixed-use centers is to provide Estero with central gathering places for Estero’s residents, business people, and visitors. The aim of the economic areas is to provide the community a diverse employment and economic base while meeting the commercial, professional, and service needs of the people who live, work, and play within the community.

POLICY 19.2.1: Provide for the development of walkable mixed-use town centers and economic areas featuring diverse housing options; government offices and public facilities; medical facilities; employment centers; public gathering places, parks, outdoor plazas, and other public spaces; greenway trails and pathways; and public access to the community’s natural resources through Lee Plan policies and LDC regulations that support Estero’s distinct community character and adhere to the following community priorities:

- a. Support the development of a central town center to unify the community;
- b. Improve the connectivity between Estero’s residential neighborhoods, economic areas, civic uses, and park and recreational facilities;
- c. Diversify the community’s economic base and employment opportunities;
- d. Encourage the development of targeted industry clusters—particularly health industries, professional services and businesses, and technology, research, and development;
- e. Expand multi-modal transportation options through improved pedestrian access, bikeways, transit service, and rail opportunities;
- f. Improve access to the community’s blueways—particularly the Estero river—, greenway trails, other open spaces;
- g. Promote the community’s cultural and historic resources; public spaces, parks, and recreational facilities; and other community amenities;
- h. Maintain a unified and pleasing aesthetic/visual quality in landscaping, architecture, lighting, and signage; and
- i. Promote and incentivize private investment within mixed-use centers and economic areas.

POLICY 19.2.2: Facilitate the development of a town center for the Estero community through the development of LDC standards, plans, and incentives that address the community’s need for

a central civic and economic core that is connected to surrounding residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and community park and recreational facilities.

POLICY 19.2.3: Establish a safe and desirable urban environment within the Estero community by adopting Lee Plan policies and LDC standards that guide development in the community's major economic areas near FGCU, along the U.S. 41 corridor, along Corkscrew Road, and in the Old Estero area that:

- a. Address streetscaping design and amenities, residential buffering standards, commercial center developments, signage, transportation facility needs, and other community concerns;
- b. Provide for the economic and employment needs of the Estero community by utilizing the Mixed-Use Overlay to facilitate the development of mixed-use centers along the US 41, Corkscrew Road, Three Oaks Parkway, Ben Hill Griffin Parkway, Via Coconut/Sandy Lane, and in the Old Estero area; and
- c. Discourage stand alone commercial retail in favor of mixed-use centers at these locations.

POLICY 19.2.4: Ensure that future commercial and mixed-use developments meet the community's planning priorities by requiring that all new commercial development which requires rezoning within Estero must be reviewed as a Commercial (CPD), Mixed Use (MPD), or Compact Communities Planned Development (CCPD).

POLICY 19.2.5: Support the development of mixed-use centers by enabling nightclub, bar, and cocktail lounges within mixed-use centers developed through the CCPD or MPD of a DRI to be considered through a public review process that receives significant community support. The specific location of these uses are to be designed as part of an overall development project and placed within the project so that it 1) supports and is supported by other entertainment and restaurant establishments and 2) is placed near the physical center of the mixed-use development project. Except as set forth above in this policy, the following uses are prohibited within Estero: any detrimental use (as defined in the LDC); nightclubs or bar and cocktail lounges not associated with a group III restaurant; tattoo parlors, and retail uses that require outdoor display in excess of one acre. Outdoor display in excess of one acre is permitted within the property located in the Interchange Land Use Category west of I-75, south of Corkscrew Road, and east of Corkscrew Woodlands Boulevard.

POLICY 19.2.6: Encourage the development of medical related uses within Estero by working with Lee County and private property owners to adopt appropriate land use policies, land development standards, identify appropriate sites and locations, and establish incentives for the development of health related facilities. Particular emphasis will focus on establishing a medical economic center in the southern section of Estero along U.S. 41.

POLICY 19.2.7: Facilitate the development of professional, and research and development economic areas by working with Lee County and private property owners to adopt appropriate land use policies, land development standards, identify appropriate sites and locations, and establish incentives for the development of professional and research and development facilities. Particular emphasis shall be on locating such facilities in areas that take advantage of FGCU educational resources and high technology facilities.

## **ESTERO RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS**

OBJECTIVE 19.3: Support Estero's quality of life, promote the community's unique character through the development of diverse, well-designed, and well-connected residential neighborhoods, and provide for the needs of multigenerational community by supporting a variety of housing types and neighborhood development forms.

POLICY 19.3.1: Support and enhance the Estero's residential character by strictly evaluating how the proposed residential neighborhoods:

- a. Relate to adjacent uses, public facilities, and infrastructure systems;
- b. Impact surrounding environmental and natural resources;
- c. Access nearby parks, public spaces, recreational facilities, and greenways, blueways, and natural open spaces;
- d. Connect to adjacent residential developments, mixed-use centers, economic areas, public facilities, and community resources; and
- e. Contribute to the overall design, landscaping, and aesthetics that make up the community's built environment.

POLICY 19.3.2: Meet the future needs of Florida Gulf Coast University by encouraging higher density residential developments, with a mix of unit types and design forms, including affordable housing and mixed-use centers, in close proximity to Florida Gulf Coast University. The development of such housing and mixed-use centers will consider the transitions between the adjacent residential neighborhoods, commercial centers, and park and recreational facilities.

POLICY 19.3.3: Maintain a well-designed and landscaped community while providing appropriate transitions between residential uses and surrounding areas by establishing LDC landscaping requirements consistent with, and appropriate to, adjacent uses. Such landscaping requirements may be greater between residential and commercial uses, while less stringent within differing uses within a mixed-use center.



## ESTERO TRANSPORTATION CONNECTIVITY AND MOBILITY

OBJECTIVE 19.4: Facilitate the development of an interconnected, well linked community that enables people to easily access Estero's neighborhoods, commercial and mixed-use centers as well as other areas within the county and region through an integrated transportation and mobility system.

POLICY 19.4.1: Establish land development code standards that ensure the development of a well connected transportation system that includes pedestrian pathways, bikeways, transit, and roadways by encouraging private developments to:

- a. Provide interconnects with adjacent uses;
- b. Minimize access points onto primary road corridors by providing multiple access to adjacent properties;
- c. Link neighborhoods, commercial and mixed-use centers, public facilities, and parks; and
- d. Enable multi-modal transportation access (pedestrian, bike, vehicular, and transit) within and between the different neighborhoods, economic and employment centers, civic uses, and public space, park, and recreational facilities within the Estero Community.

POLICY 19.4.2: Support the efforts to establish an active passenger rail corridor along the existing rail line that passes through Estero in order to provide alternate modes of transportation linking Estero to Naples in the south and to Fort Myers and Punta Gorda in the north. Additionally, while planning continues with respect to the development of such passenger rail service, Estero strongly supports the efforts of Lee County to establish a rails with trails corridor.

POLICY 19.4.3: Expand Estero's transportation network of pedestrian and bicycle pathways, sidewalks, trails, and other facilities by working with Lee County, State of Florida, and other local, state, and regional entities to:

- a. Construct multi-use pathways that feature shade trees, benches, bike racks, and other design elements to attract usage;
- b. Identify targeted funding sources including development contributions, private donations, public funding sources (e.g.: MSBU), or other mechanisms;
- c. Implement the greenways master plan within the Estero community by working with Lee County Parks Department;
- d. Utilize the FP&L right of way within Estero State Buffer Preserve by working with FP&L and Lee County;
- e. Establish a pedestrian-bike trail within or along the rail right of way for public recreation by working with the existing rail corridor and private developers; and

- f. Encourage the development of an effective rail system by working with the existing rail corridor to improve and expand use of existing rail facilities.

POLICY 19.4.4: All public and private rights of way within future mixed-use centers and the Old Estero area are encouraged to be designed to include pedestrian ways, cross walks and traffic calming measures including, where appropriate, on-street parking, raised crosswalks, narrow lane widths or other similar mechanisms.

POLICY 19.4.5: Provide for well designed, safe, and multi-use transportation corridors by establishing, maintaining, and implementing complete street design guidelines for the major roadways within Estero including the US 41, Corkscrew Road, Via Coconut/Sandy Lane, and Three Oaks Parkway. In design, address roadway and median landscape standards, access management guidelines, signage, street lighting, and sidewalks to ensure safe and effective pedestrian crossings within the context of a comprehensive pedestrian and bikeway system.

POLICY 19.4.6: Address regional transportation demands and considerations by proactively working with Lee County, private developers, and the applicable advisory boards to Lee County to improve transportation connectivity and mobility throughout Estero and to other communities.

## **ESTERO NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT**

OBJECTIVE 19.5: Ensure that Estero’s natural environment enhances the character and quality of life of the community by protecting the natural resources of Estero, promoting the area’s natural environment to visitors and residents, and supporting public access to greenway and waterfront areas.

POLICY 19.5.1: Protect the natural environment and resources of Estero by working with Lee County to maintain, amend, and implement Lee Plan or LDC regulations that:

- a. Protect the quality and prevent degrading of Estero’s natural environment, native species and habitats, and ecological resources; and;
- b. Ensure new development provides public access to Estero waterways and greenways, as appropriate. Particular emphasis shall be given to properties along Estero River, its tributaries, and any Estero open spaces;
- c. Incentivize the protection of Estero’s natural resources—e.g.: wetlands, uplands, historic flow ways, native habitat, or other ecological resources; and
- d. Require all new developments adjacent to Estero River or its tributaries to incorporate design techniques that protect the river’s water quality through improved runoff or stormwater discharge practices. These techniques may include: the preservation of wetland areas, the incorporation of Low Impact Development techniques, or other surface water quality enhancement technologies.

POLICY 19.5.2: Estero will work with Lee County, private property owners, and developers to improve public access, use, and enjoyment of Estero's waterfront and water-based resources by creating community water-based amenities such as Estero Bay water taxi, marina facilities, or other water-dependent facilities.

POLICY 19.5.3: Support the long term protection of Estero's environment and natural resources by working with Lee County and other local, regional, state, and national agencies and organizations to identify and preserve natural resources and the environment.

POLICY 19.5.4: The Estero Community attaches great importance to the integrity of Lee County provisions in the Lee Plan and the Land Development Code with respect to the Density Reduction/Groundwater Resource Area (DR/GR) in so far as actions with respect to the DR/GR have an impact on the environment, natural resources, mobility, sense of place, and character of Estero. Accordingly, the Estero Community urges Lee County in its regulations, policies, and actions to protect the Estero Community from any adverse impacts in this regard.

## **ESTERO PUBLIC SPACES, PARKS, AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

OBJECTIVE 19.6: Support Estero's quality of life through the development of a broad array of community parks, public spaces, and recreational facilities.

POLICY 19.6.1: Promote the development of a variety of public spaces, park, and recreational facilities within Estero by collaborating with Lee County, State of Florida, private developers and other local, state, and national organizations on the development of active and passive public resources and facilities.

POLICY 19.6.2: Expand the use, variety, and type of public spaces, parks, and recreational facilities within Estero by working with private developments to provide linkages, access, public parks, public space, and recreational amenities through the use of incentives, LDC requirements, and other development tools.

POLICY 19.6.3: Promote Estero Community Park as a hub for the entire community by utilizing park areas to link neighborhoods, commercial and mixed-use centers, and other open space and recreational facilities through an integrated system of bike, pedestrian, and roadways connections.

POLICY 19.6.4: Integrate the Koreshan State Historic Site into the fabric of the community by collaborating with the State of Florida, Lee County, and the Estero Community to improve the

area's landscaping, enhance pedestrian and bicycle access, historic resources and structures, and community park program and activities.

POLICY 19.6.5: Provide passive recreational opportunities within Estero State Buffer Preserve, Estero River, and Estero Bay by collaborating with the State of Florida, Lee County, private property owners, and the Estero community to ensure the community's parks, natural amenities, and open spaces have easy access, parking, trails, and other community amenities.

## **ESTERO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

**OBJECTIVE 19.7:** The public will have meaningful and appropriate opportunities to participate in and comment upon development in and around the Estero community.

POLICY 19.7.1: As a courtesy, Lee County will register citizen groups and civic organizations within the Estero community planning area that desire notification of pending review of Land Development Code amendments and Lee Plan amendments. Upon registration, Lee County will provide registered groups with documentation regarding these 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, or failure of a group to receive mailed notice, will not constitute a defect in notice or bar a public hearing from occurring as scheduled.

POLICY 19.7.2: The Estero Community will establish an online document clearing house for their community, where copies of selected zoning submittal documents, staff reports, Hearing Examiner recommendations, and resolutions will be provided for public inspection. The county's failure to provide or to timely provide documents to the online document clearing house, or failure of the online document clearing house to receive documents, will not constitute a defect in notice or bar a public hearing from occurring as scheduled.

POLICY 19.7.3: The owner or agent applying for Planned Developments, Rezoning, Variances, Special Exceptions, Plan Amendments, Administrative Amendments, Development Orders and Limited Development Orders for county approval within the Estero Community must conduct one public informational session within the community in a publicly owned or leased facility where the agent will provide a general overview of the project for any interested citizens. Lee County encourages planning, zoning, and/or development services staff to participate at such public meetings. This meeting must be conducted before the application can be found sufficient. The applicant is fully responsible for providing the meeting space, providing advance notice of the meeting place, time and date and providing security measures as needed. 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. If the applicant chooses to hold the public meeting before any established community groups, then the minutes of that meeting as may be applicable must be provided prior to a finding of sufficiency.