

CPA2011-07
CHARACTER AND FORM ELEMENT
BOCC SPONSORED
EAR BASED AMENDMENT
TO THE

LEE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

THE LEE PLAN

Publicly Sponsored Amendment and Staff Analysis

LPA Public Hearing Document
For the
August 27, 2012 Public Hearing

Lee County Planning Division
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August 17, 2012

**STAFF REPORT FOR
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT
CPA2011-02**

Text Amendment

Map Amendment

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

STAFF REPORT PREPARATION DATE: August 17, 2012

PART I - BACKGROUND AND STAFF RECOMMENDATION

A. SUMMARY OF APPLICATION

1. APPLICANT:

Lee County Board of County Commissioners
Represented by Lee County Division of Planning

2. REQUEST:

Create a new “Character and Form Element” of the Lee Plan, incorporating the recommendations of County staff and the March 1, 2011 Evaluation and Appraisal Report.

B. STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND FINDINGS OF FACT SUMMARY

1. RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that Local Planning Agency and Community Sustainability Committee review, evaluate, and recommend changes to the draft Character and Form Element of the Lee Plan as identified in Attachment 1. Staff will utilize the recommended changes to the proposed element to revise the element prior to it being transmitted to the Board of County Commissioners for adoption as part of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) based amendments to the comprehensive plan. These changes will be brought

back to the LPA as part of the review of the entire EAR-based plan amendments, which will occur prior to being transmitted to the BoCC. Proposed text within this report has been depicted in underline format as all of the language is new as this new element to the Lee Plan.

2. BASIS AND RECOMMENDED FINDINGS OF FACT:

- The Board of County Commissioners initiated this plan amendment on March 1, 2011, with the adoption of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report.
- The adopted Evaluation and Appraisal Report found that the updated Lee Plan needed to address element clarity, effectiveness and redundancies.
- The intent statement is included to explain the element's purpose and application.
- The proposed new Communities Element is consistent with the recommendations in the Evaluation and Appraisal Report.
- The Evaluation and Appraisal Report recommended that the county develop a Character and Form Element that would not be regulatory but is recommended to guide the development of other plan elements.
- Goal 1: Lee County Places and Communities addresses the EAR recommendation to establish specific character and form principles for urban, suburban, and rural places.
- Goal 2: Mixed-use Development Strategies and Priorities addresses the EAR recommendation to promote the development of places with a mix of uses, promote livability and walkability, and include diverse housing opportunities.
- Goal 3: Holistic Resource Management and Development Strategy addresses the EAR recommendation to establish strategies that enable the county to promote living within its limits while understanding the interconnections among economic conditions, societal needs, and environmental conditions.
- The proposed amendment meets the statutory requirements of FS 163.3177 for optional elements.

C. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Chapter 163.3177 of the Florida Statutes allows local government to prepare elements that they deem appropriate for their communities. Chapter 163.3177(a) of the Florida Statutes specifically states that:

The comprehensive plan shall consist of elements as described in this section, and may include optional elements.

PART II - STAFF ANALYSIS

A. STAFF DISCUSSION

The creation of this new element is based on the recommendations contained in the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR), New Horizon 2035, which was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on March 1st, 2011. The EAR provided both general and

specific recommendations for the Lee Plan and called for the creation of a new Character and Form Element.

General recommendations for the Character and Form Element include the following:

- Provide a clear definition of and distinction between the desired character and form of urban, suburban, and rural areas, addressing at a broad level issues such as compact growth and mixed-use centers. In addition, the relationship of environmental resource areas to different types of developed areas should be addressed.
- Establish design principles that address the desired development patterns within the county at a broad level, including: mixed-use development, compact development patterns, and desired community character for urban, suburban, and rural areas.
- Establish policies that support infill and redevelopment as keys to achieving a more compact and efficient development pattern.

The EAR also included general organizational recommendations. One of these recommendations was to provide a clear overview section in each element that sets the context for the goals, objectives, and policies that follow, in addition to describing the relationships and linkages to other elements in the plan. This recommendation is particularly important for the development of the Character and Form Element as it helps explain what this element accomplishes, the components of the element, and how it is to be used.

As explained by the Character and Form Element intent statement this element seeks to establish a conceptual county framework for development and planning. The framework will guide the development, use, and implementation of other plan elements such as the Future Land Use, Transportation, Community Facilities, Conservation and Coastal Management, Community Safety and Wellbeing, Parks and Recreation, and Capital Improvement Elements. By establishing a conceptual county framework for planning and development, the goals, objectives, and policies in this element help ensure the Vision Statement is achieved and realized.

Character and Form Element: Broad Policy Direction and Form Principles

As recommended in Chapter 4 of the EAR, the Character and Form Element addresses the desired form and character of future development within the county at the broadest level. Form principles for urban, suburban, rural, and mixed-use places build upon the EAR vision framework and Lee Plan Vision Statement. The principles provide broad policy direction on the general distinctions between these places and explain how they differ from one another. The principles also identify the desired development patterns, transportation systems, and incentives for each type of place. The policy direction expands upon the Vision Framework Element—placing an emphasis on establishing a clearer distinction between urban, suburban, and rural places; supporting the development of mixed-use places; promoting compact development patterns that provide efficient and cost-effective infrastructure and service

delivery; and protecting and enhancing community character and environmental resource areas.

The broad policy direction established in the Character and Form Element will be reinforced by more detailed and specific policy direction in other elements of the plan including the Future Land Use, Transportation, Capital Improvements, Conservation and Coastal Management, Community Facilities, and Parks and Recreation Elements. As an example, the Character and Form Element broadly defines rural character from the standpoint of the types and form of development pattern and transportation components that are desirable in these locations. The Future Land Use Element will establish specific land use practices that are needed to achieve rural character through land use priorities and incentives, land use categories, and growth management practices. The Transportation Element will address the needs for context-sensitive transportation systems. The Conservation and Coastal Management Element will establish policies regarding habitat preservation and protection, targeted conservation areas, and natural species protection. The Communities Element will identify and establish specific goals, objectives, and policies related to each rural community.

By establish broad policy direction and form principles, the element provides the basis for evaluating future land use designations and locations for mixed-use. The element will be used to reaffirm that the proposed development, county program, or capital improvement project implements the county's vision and desired form and character. The result of this element is the assurance that the county's vision and land use framework as described in this EAR will be successfully implemented.

How the element accomplishes this intent is described through an explanation of the element's three goals is discussed below.

Goal 1: Urban, Suburban, Rural Places

The policies in Goal 1 consider what land use tools are needed to better define urban, suburban, and rural areas (e.g., urban growth boundary and/or urban service area), identify areas appropriate for urban, suburban, and rural places, and establish standards to limit expansion of development outside of these designated areas. The Character and Form Element addresses the need to foster a more defined development pattern by supporting land use practices and tools that provide for the contiguous development of land, expanding transportation systems and public facilities to meet those development areas located adjacent to existing infrastructure areas, and prioritizing the protection and conservation of natural resources in large, adjacent, and connected land areas.

Goal 2: Mixed-use Places

The policies in Goal 2 identify how to achieve the EAR's recommendation of establishing a variety of mixed-use places. The goal describes the components of mixed-use (e.g.: complementary mix of uses and housing options, housing opportunities, and context-oriented transportation system) and reflects the community's preferences for different types and intensities of development by establishing mixed-use form principles and concepts to guide the character and form of future centers and corridors within Lee County.

The mixed-use form policies included within this element are intended to encourage the development of five different types of mixed-use places: regional centers, community centers, neighborhood centers, rural centers, and mixed-use corridors. The different types of mixed-use places identified are not intended as a one size fits all approach for development in Lee County, but describe a range of placemaking concepts to be adapted to specific centers and corridors, based upon their location, size, surrounding context, and other development considerations.

Goal 3: Resource Efficient Practices

Goal 3 seeks to build-upon the EAR's discussion of a comprehensive resource management and development framework by establishing a strategy for more efficient government operations and transforming the county's approach to all aspects of planning. This entails many traditional aspects of planning such as development patterns, environmental resources, housing, and transportation, as well as a wide variety of other topics such as community well-being and livability, energy use and efficiency, and economic resiliency and diversity. The strategy promoted through goal 3 promotes living within the county's inherent limits, and also explains the interconnections between economy, society, and environmental conditions. This goal is based upon the current sustainability policies that can be continued and enhanced as well as new ways that Lee County can better manage its resources through new development initiatives.

As this is a new element, the goals, objectives, and policies are shown in underline. However, as it is based upon the direction provided through the EAR, notes are included that identify what sections of the EAR the policies address.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES TO BE ADDED

Lee County is recognized for its unique community character and sense of place that has been established by the quality, nature, and makeup of its urban, suburban, and rural communities as well as the form and design of its mixed-use places. This character is what helps define the county and sets one county apart from another. A county's character supports its quality of life as the character helps create a sense of community identity, unity, and spirit. Character and form are an important component of any comprehensive planning effort as it helps define how the county will develop in the future.

By setting a planning framework for how the county will be designed, the Character and Form Element builds upon the Vision Statement and creates the context for the development of urban, suburban, and rural communities and directs the planning and development of the county's mixed-use places. It will be used to develop, use, and implement the goals, objectives, and policies of other plan elements such as the Future Land Use, Transportation, Community Facilities, Conservation and Coastal Management, Community Safety and Wellbeing, Parks and Recreation, and Capital Improvement Elements. The Character and Form Element guides the county's future development efforts as it demonstrates how to promote a community character and architectural form that is distinctly Lee County.

The result of the element is that county will achieve its vision of becoming a highly desirable place to live, work, and visit. Recognized for its commitment to a sustainable future—characterized by a healthy economy, environment, and community. A community of choice—valued for its quality of life; varied natural environment; unique sense of history and place; distinct urban, suburban, and rural communities; diverse economic and workforce; and varied travel options.

Staff recommends adding the above intent statement in order to:

- Address the EAR’s finding regarding the need to better define and articulate the purpose of each element;
- Outline how this element is to be used; and
- Explain the relationship between this element and the other elements.

GOAL 1: LEE COUNTY PLACES AND COMMUNITIES

Guide the character and form of development and redevelopment activities that support the county’s vision for enhancing the county’s existing and emerging communities through better defined urban, suburban, and rural places.

Staff recommends that the above goal be added to the comprehensive plan in order to implement the county’s vision for better defined, unique urban, suburban, and rural places. This goal establishes the conceptual county framework, guides the design and development of urban, suburban, and rural communities, and implements the findings and recommendations for urban suburban, and rural places outlined in EAR Chapter 2 Vision Framework: A Sustainable Planning Approach.

OBJECTIVE 1.1: FORM AND DESIGN. Create a framework and implementation strategy that will enhance the livability of Lee County; preserve its natural, cultural, and physical resources; promote sustainable, energy-efficient land use patterns; and discourage urban sprawl.

POLICY 1.1.1: Guide the county’s land use policy and development practices through character and form principles that reinforce Lee County’s vision. These character and form principles include:

- Fostering distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place;
- Encouraging community and stakeholder collaboration;
- Making development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective;
- Strengthening and directing development towards existing communities;
- Promoting diverse economic development opportunities;
- Mixing land uses;
- Taking advantage of compact building design and patterns of development;
- Creating walkable neighborhoods;
- Providing a variety of transportation choices;
- Creating a range of housing opportunities and choices;
- Preserving open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas;

- l. Supporting commercial agriculture; and
- m. Developing context-oriented, efficient and cost effective infrastructure systems and service delivery practices.

POLICY 1.1.2: Use the conceptual county framework to illustrate the vision as expressed in the Vision Framework Element through the identification of three predominant development character places. These character places include:

- a. Urban Character Places. Urban character places rely primarily on a system of interconnected streets in a grid network pattern that prioritizes pedestrians and transit features and links civic buildings, squares, parks and other neighborhood uses.
- b. Suburban Character Places. Suburban character places rely primarily on a pattern of residential development that is formed on a street network with fewer vehicular connections. Enhancements to typical suburban character would include additional pedestrian and bicycle connections.
- c. Rural Character Places. Rural character places rely primarily on agricultural lands, conservation and environmental areas, and large lot low-density residential properties connected via a system of major roadways.

POLICY 1.1.3: Identify urban, suburban, and rural character types that articulate the unique qualities of each place and set the context for developing the areas in the future by:

- a. Confirming where the county intends to promote the development of existing and emerging urban, suburban, and rural places;
- b. Establishing specific site design and transportation design practices that are consistent with the envisioned future for the area;
- c. Defining incentives that support that each place's form of development.

Staff recommends the above objective and policies be added to the Lee Plan to establish the key components of the county's conceptual framework whereby urban, suburban, and rural places are to be promoted through future planning and development practices and programs. The objective and policies are designed to present an introduction and develop a structure for the other objectives and policies within this goal by:

- Establishing the framework's guiding principles, which are based upon guiding principles outlined in the adopted EAR;
- Defining the development form for urban, suburban, and rural character places; and
- Explaining the context for identifying and implementing urban, suburban, and rural character places.

OBJECTIVE 1.2: URBAN CHARACTER PLACES. Urban character places are centrally located, higher density, and well connected places. Urban places rely on an interconnected development pattern that integrates land uses (e.g.: economic businesses, residential dwellings, governmental services, civic resources, public spaces, and parks), multimodal transportation systems with public spaces and shared community areas. Through these form and character principles, the county will foster emerging urban places (e.g.: North Fort Myers Town Center, South Point-McGregor Center, Downtown Lehigh Acres, and Iona-McGregor) promote continued development and encourage the redevelopment of established

development places (e.g.: Central Tice, Page Park, Andy Rosse Lane, Boca Grade Center, and the historic cores of Alva and Matlacha), and continue to promote development of future urban places in appropriate locations throughout the county. The county has three urban character places—urban core communities, central places, and village centers.

- a. CORE COMMUNITIES: Core communities are emerging urban character places that are the focus of future development in three distinct and well defined places (North Fort Myers Town Center, South Point–McGregor Center, and Downtown Lehigh Acres) that act to center the county’s urban places. As each of these are developed and redeveloped in the future, they will work to provide the surrounding communities that rely upon them a core community area with easy access to high intensity development places with major economic and public services including education, government offices, large-scale businesses, commercial and professional offices, as well as variety of park and public space. Additionally, these places provide opportunities for the county to establish higher density residential options such as apartments, condominiums, and live-work housing. By promoting the development of emerging core communities, the county will be able to establish major urban places that help link and connect other areas of the region together through an interconnected multi-modal transportation system that features highly effective transit options, major employment opportunities, and regional services. Future development of these places will improve the urban form and character of the core communities by establishing mixed-use centers, improving the internal and external connections, expanding transit service, and providing more options for housing, transportation, recreation, and community activities.

- b. CENTRAL PLACES: Central places are emerging urban character places that are the focus of future development in the areas that surround the urban core communities as well additional communities—Central Tice, Iona-McGregor near the gateway to Sanibel and Captiva, Page Park, and at the gateway to Lehigh Acres near the City of Fort Myers border. By promoting the development and redevelopment of central places, the county will create urban centers that meet the needs and demands of local community and help link different communities within the county together through transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and vehicular connections. Future development of these places will improve the urban character of these places by helping integrate the surrounding core communities, high density urban neighborhoods, and parks and public together. Additionally, development of central places into urban character places will enable the county to provide a greater variety of housing types and park and public spaces as well as help transition the county’s urban places into the adjacent suburban residential neighborhoods and economic centers.

- c. VILLAGE CENTERS: Village Centers are small pockets of urban character places located within suburban and rural communities including those located along Andy Rosse Lane in Captiva, Railroad Street in Boca Grande, and in the historic cores of Alva and Matlacha. Comprised of a mix of residential homes, commercial shops, services, and restaurants, and civic places and parks, village centers provide the needs

demanded by the community members who live, work, and visit the local area. By continuing to promote the development of village centers, the county will be able to meet the local needs of different neighborhoods through urban centers that fit the context of the neighborhood it is designed to serve. The size, scale, and interconnected land use form of these makes walking the primary mode of transportation within the village centers, as pedestrians are easily able to access places within the centers. Future development of village centers will ensure that these places continue to provide for the needs of community in a walkable, pedestrian friendly form of development by support the area's historic development pattern. Additionally, the county will work to develop other village centers in targeted locations throughout the county so as to enable other communities to have a local village center.

Staff recommends the objective regarding urban character places be added to the comprehensive plan in order to define the urban places, where they are located within the county, their development form and components, and how they are to be developed in the future. The objective explains the similarities and difference between Lee County's three urban character places—core communities, central places, and village centers. The definition for each urban place includes a discussion of the unique qualities of each area so that they may recognize how they contribute to the county's conceptual framework. Specifically, the definitions explain the following:

- All urban character places include an interconnected land use framework with a variety of land uses, services, and resources; provide a variety of transportation alternatives (walk, bike, vehicle, and transit) based upon the type of urban place it is; and include diverse public space and civic resources.
- The key difference between the core communities, central places, and village centers are:
 - Core communities are the largest, most developed, and most diverse urban places in the county. They provide the county opportunities to act as major hubs for urban activity in the future with increased transit service, diversified economic and housing opportunities, and increased connections to other communities in the region.
 - Central places are community oriented urban places that provide each community area the transportation options, services, and employment opportunities one expects to find within an urban area. Some central places are located in the areas surrounding core communities as they provide a transition between larger, more developed core communities and suburban places. Other central places are located in the center of suburban place where they act the defining urban place and help provide the suburban area a central urban place.
 - Village centers are local, neighborhood urban places that are designed to only meet the needs and demands of the neighborhood it serves. While urban in form and function, their size and scale is designed to fit within the context of the surrounding area. Additionally, the transportation, service, housing and economic options are based upon the needs of the local area and may not include resources (e.g.: bus rapid transit) that one would expect in larger more developed urban places like core communities and central places.

In addition to defining each type of urban place, this objective also identifies and explains that urban places are ever changing and developing. It explains that while some of the places exist today (e.g.: Central Tice, Page Park, Andy Rosse Lane, Boca Grade Center, and the historic cores of Alva and Matlacha) others are emerging places in the future (e.g.: North Fort Myers Town Center, South Point-McGregor Center, Downtown Lehigh Acres, and Iona-McGregor). It also explains and provides direction about how these places will change through future development and redevelopment practices. Additionally, by identifying emerging core communities, the objective sets the foundation for other county development initiatives by recognizing that the county should focus on these areas in the future.

POLICY 1.2.1: Utilize urban character area development principles to guide the form and use of the county's core communities, central places, and village centers, based upon the context of the surrounding community;

- a. Establish the highest level of density, intensity, and building form standards within the urban character places;
- b. Provide an integrated mix of residential, commercial, and recreational uses that enable people opportunities and options to live, work, and play within the same community
- c. Support an active lifestyle by promoting a variety of complimentary uses that provide for the day, evening, and nighttime needs of residents, business people, and visitors (e.g.: residential, shopping, service, social, and recreational);
- d. Promote the development of urban centers and corridors through the conversion of declining shopping plazas and commercial roadways;
- e. Align public investments, incentives, and policies to encourage and protect redevelopment and revitalization opportunities that leverage existing economic assets; and
- f. Promote the revitalization of developed neighborhoods located within the core communities and central places through innovative development practices that enable single-use neighborhoods to transition to more active live-work communities.

POLICY 1.2.2: Utilize urban character transportation principles to guide the provision of highly interconnected multi-modal transportation systems and services, linking commuters, daily needs, services, employment, civic buildings, public spaces, and other neighborhood uses within the urban area:

- a. Enhance or create a street grid or equivalent system with streets that feature small blocks, narrow street widths, sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian accessibility, and bikeways;
- b. Prioritize a transportation network and pattern of complete streets that encourage walking and biking and provides for the safety and needs of all users and all modes;
- c. Promote and support transit as a convenient and highly reliable means of travel by increasing transit standards within the urban places through bus rapid transit (BRT) lines, express route services, park and ride centers, and transit hubs, as appropriate to the context of the surrounding community;
- d. Encourage bicycling by integrating bicycle facilities with the street network, connecting the street grid to trails and greenways, and providing bicycle infrastructure such as bike racks, bike lanes, and intermodal connections;

- e. Providing transportation options that reduce the amount and size of parking lots including shared parking options, structured parking lots above ground floor commercial space or internal to lined commercial buildings, on-street parking, and improved transit service;
- f. Accommodate local delivery of commercial goods by truck; and
- g. Reduce the number and length of automobile trips and vehicle miles traveled.

POLICY 1.2.3: Achieve the vision of centrally located, high density, and well connected urban places by guiding development within urban character places through the following practices—particularly those located in targeted emerging and established urban places including North Fort Myers, Lehigh Acres, South Point-McGregor, Iona-McGregor, and Tice:

- a. Improve land use connections through the redevelopment of underutilized commercial developments into mixed-use centers;
- b. Expand vehicular transportation connections through the development of a grid or highly connected roadway network and expanded transit services to integrate local neighborhoods, economic districts, mixed-use places, civic resources, and public spaces;
- c. Develop the interconnectivity of the area through the implementation of complete street initiatives that aim to provide access for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and drivers through roadway designs that improve safety for all users; expand accessibility for transit riders, pedestrians, and bicyclist; and provide additional access points and connections;
- d. Improve connectivity between the many sections of the urban community including its residential, economic centers, and public spaces places through redevelopment plans that identify opportunities to rebuild, enhance, or establish a grid street network; urban trail network; and integrated urban park system;
- e. Identify opportunities to make connections between existing neighborhoods, commercial corridors, economic centers, and other community areas through public spaces and parks—particularly in areas where roadway or urban trail connections are not otherwise feasible; and
- f. Promote the reuse and redevelopment of historic and cultural resources in order to support the community’s heritage while allowing for future growth and development of the area.

POLICY 1.2.4: Promote the development of urban character places through the following development practices and incentives:

- a. Prioritize urban character places in future budgets, capital improvement programs, grant programs and applications, and other public expenditures and fiscal planning efforts;
- b. Support the development of mixed-use centers in targeted locations (e.g.: North Fort Myers, Lehigh Acres, South Point-McGregor, and Tice) within the urban character places by facilitating the development of regulating plans, prioritizing places with established regulating plans for county infrastructure, transportation, and public service programs;
- c. Support the distinct character and building style of the county’s urban places by promoting historic resources through the implementation of historic resource preservation programs, development practices, and grant projects;
- d. Promote the diversification and interconnectivity of urban economic centers so that they are able to support a balanced way of life for all county residents while expanding the county’s economic opportunities;

- e. Utilize the transfer of development rights program to support increased densities within the urban area;
- a. Establish urban land use categories and urban mixed-use standards that include high densities and intensity standards, interconnectivity requirements, transit service goals, and places for mixed-use;
- b. Enable increased urban densities through transfer and purchase development rights that enable density to be bought or transferred from elsewhere in the county into the urban character places; and
- c. Maintain and implement minimum density and intensity standards that ensure developments within the area are built in an appropriate form.

Staff recommends the above set of policies be added to the comprehensive plan as they establish the foundation for development and redevelopment of the county's urban character places. The policies build off the discussion of urban areas found in the EAR Chapter 2 on pages 4-5, as they establish:

- Character and form principles for the development of urban places;
- Development practices that will create and define urban places;
- Transportation practices that promote multi-modal transportation options that link and connect urban communities together; and
- Incentives that will promote the development of urban places in targeted locations.

The implementation of these policies will enable the county to create urban places within targeted emerging communities and promote the redevelopment of established urban places.

OBJECTIVE 1.3: SUBURBAN CHARACTER PLACES: Suburban character places are where the county has or is developing well-designed residential communities with commercial and office businesses, civic areas, and parks that support the needs and demands of the people who live there. Suburban places are linked together through a well defined system of roadways, pedestrian and bike connections, and open space areas, which support a residential lifestyle, provide privacy for homes, and establish distinct boundaries for the different neighborhoods and suburban communities. The county has seven suburban character places—early neighborhoods, large platted communities, subdivision developments, coastal residential, major employment and economic centers, office business parks, and interchanges.

- a. EARLY NEIGHBORHOODS: Early neighborhoods are typically older suburban character places that are found in communities throughout the county including Tice, Page Park, Pine Manor, North Fort Myers, and Caloosahatchee Shores. These neighborhoods were developed in the first part of the twentieth century and feature smaller single family homes on small lots developed on a narrow street network. While these neighborhoods are generally stable, there are pockets of less stable neighborhoods that could diminish the wellbeing of other nearby neighborhoods. Located close to the City of Fort Myers borders, the future development of these neighborhoods provides opportunities to transition from the county's more intensely developed urban places to the less dense suburban neighborhoods. Additionally, the

- focused redevelopment of the less stable early neighborhoods would provide opportunities for the county to connect and link its urban places to nearby suburban residential areas, while supporting the entire county's overall stability and livability.
- b. LARGE PLATTED COMMUNITIES: Large platted communities are suburban character places that are found in four predominant places within unincorporated Lee County: Lehigh Acres, San Carlos Park, The Villas, and Fort Myers Shores. Established during the latter half of the twentieth century, large platted communities were developed as predominantly ½ acre and ¼ acre residential home sites lacking sufficient supporting services, businesses, and amenities typically associated with neighborhood development. Some of the insufficient uses include: commercial and office centers, public water and sewer, sidewalks and pedestrian pathways, and parks and open spaces. Over time, as the places have been developed, services and amenities have been developed along the major roadway corridors located at the edge of these residential communities. However, the separation between residential neighborhoods and commercial corridors has prevented the community from forming a diverse development pattern. Future development of these places will provide the county opportunities to establish better connections between different sections of the communities, improve linkages within and between uses within the communities, and provide new and expanded businesses, public services, parks, and amenities needed by the residents who live in these large platted communities.
- c. SUBDIVISION DEVELOPMENTS: Subdivision developments are suburban character places that are found in communities throughout the county including neighborhoods within North Fort Myers, Burnt Store, Caloosahatchee Shores, South Fort Myers, Iona-McGregor, and Estero. The predominant form of development that took place since the 1980s is typically single-use, architecturally distinct subdivision development with distinctly located neighborhoods, commercial centers, and park areas. A hierarchical roadway and sidewalk system links each part of the subdivision to the surrounding community and adjacent neighborhoods, commercial centers, and park and recreational amenities while supporting the privacy and borders of each subdivision. Future development of these places will provide the county opportunities to improve connectivity within and between residential subdivision and commercial areas through infill and commercial reuse projects aimed at establishing mixed-use center developments, public space areas, and greenways.
- d. COASTAL COMMUNITIES: Coastal communities are suburban character places that are located in the county's coastal places including the residential and commercial areas of Pine Island, Captiva, Useppa, and Boca Grande. Coastal communities are noted for their isolated, beach and water oriented locations, private and independent infrastructure services and systems, strong connection to the environment, and tourist economy. Future development of these communities will provide the county the opportunity to protect and support the vital environmental resources while reinforcing their distinct identity and lifestyle and providing access to the services and businesses needed by the coastal suburban residents. Additionally,

future development efforts will promote tourist-oriented projects that enhance the coastal way-of-life through a focus on sustainable development practices.

- e. OPEN SPACES, PARKS, AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES: Open spaces, parks, and recreational resources are typically suburban character places, although they are located throughout the county. These areas provide for the varied park, recreation, and open space needs of county residents and visitors and to provide these needs in an array of public and private resources and facilities. These areas also enable the county to conserve and protect vital natural assets located within developed areas of the county. Future development of parks and open spaces will create opportunities for the county to achieve its vision of better connected neighborhoods, commercial areas, and mixed-use centers while enabling the county to link wildlife corridors and conservation areas in suburban places.

- f. MAJOR EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC CENTERS: Major employment and economic centers are urban character places that are focused on industrial and research economic uses. The county's predominant major employment and economic centers are located in the following locations: southern edge of Tice, western edge of Lehigh Acres, the North Fort Myers-I-75 Interchange, along Metro Parkway, surrounding Page Field, by Daniels Parkway – Six Mile Cypress Expressway – U.S. 41, the tradeport area (located adjacent to Southwest Florida International Airport), and around Florida Gulf Coast University. Major employment and economic centers are an important component of the county's economic development strategy as these places enable the county to strengthen and expand its economic base through diverse business, job, and investment opportunities. These places have special locational requirements including highway, rail, and air transport of goods, products, and materials; increased level of service needs for water, sewer, and fire protection; and central locations close to the workforce and the county's commuter transportation networks. Future development of the county's major employment and economic centers will result in a diverse and robust economy with opportunities for research and development, laboratories, industrial activities, office and professional businesses, and other associated industries and economic activities. Additionally, improved connections to residential, commercial, and public space areas will better integrate the county's research and industrial centers within the overall land use framework as it provides improved access to the centers' workforce, clients, and markets.

- g. OFFICE BUSINESS PARKS: Office business parks are suburban character places that provide for the needs of professional and offices uses such as lawyers, doctors and medical facilities, educational facilities, consultants, and business headquarters, and like businesses and industries. Office business parks are designed in a campus form that provides for these centers in areas close to residential, commercial, and public park resources buffered by well-designed landscape and hardscape features. Future development of office business parks will improve connections to nearby residential, commercial, and public space areas through expanded bike-ped facilities,

improved transit service, and better connected roadways in order that their workforce, clients, and visitors may more easily access these places. Additionally, in the county's mixed-use centers, these places will be seamlessly integrated with residential, commercial, and public space areas as the office and professional business uses will become the economic base and foundation for the development of centers where people can live, work, and play.

- h. INTERCHANGES: Interchanges are suburban character places that surround the six interchange places along I-75 within Lee County. Interchanges are designed to maximize the auto-centric demands of the vehicular user who is looking for easy access on and off the highway. As such these places are focused on uses such as hotels, gas-stations and convenience stores, shopping centers, fast food and quick service restaurants, and similar uses. Future development of such places will improve connectivity between interchanges and nearby residential neighborhoods, economic centers, and commercial areas. Pedestrians and bicyclists will be able to better access these places through expanded multi-use paths and improved sidewalk connections. Transit riders and carpoolers will use these places to connect to vehicular, pedestrian, and bike resources through improved park and ride facilities, increased commuter transit service, and expanded bike-walk facilities.

Staff recommends the objective regarding suburban character places be added to the comprehensive plan in order to define suburban places, where they are located within the county, their development form and components, and how they are to be developed in the future. The definition for each suburban place includes a discussion of the unique qualities of each area so that they may recognize how they contribute to the county's conceptual framework. Specifically, the definitions explain the following:

- Suburban places are focused on distinct and unique neighborhoods, economic centers, and public spaces that are linked together through a multi-modal transportation system, mixed-use centers, and parks and open spaces.
- The key characteristics of the suburban places are:
 - Early neighborhoods are older neighborhoods with smaller lots, interconnected streets, and smaller local parks, and surrounding strip-center commercial areas. While they resemble urban neighborhoods, they are included within the suburban character place type for two reasons: lack of housing diversity and disconnection with other uses. First, early neighborhoods do not include a diverse array of housing units as they feature single family independent housing units. Second, as typical of suburban communities, early neighborhoods feature distinct housing, commercial, office, and other land uses linked by a transportation system that focuses predominantly on the vehicles and roads.
 - Large platted communities are areas with large amounts of platted lots, mostly in ¼ acre and ½ acre residential home sites. These areas were designed to meet, almost exclusively, the needs of the residential home owner as there is little area to meet the commercial, service, business, park, and civic needs of the people who live there. As a result these supports uses must be placed in areas originally designed for homes (which

are usually in strip-center commercial centers) or in surrounding neighborhoods and communities.

- Subdivision developments have been the predominant form of development in Lee County since the 1980s. They are marked by single-use neighborhoods and strip-center commercial areas that have few external connections and are set off from other support uses such as parks, economic business and service areas, and civic uses. Road and cars are the dominant forms of transportation, though some uses and services are connected via a well defined sidewalk system that both allows for bike and pedestrian connections and maintains the independence of the single-family neighborhoods.
- Coastal communities are suburban neighborhoods located in the county's coastal areas. They are unique as they provide for the distinct needs of their residents and provide a great connection to beaches and surrounding water resources. Their disconnected locations result in a dependence upon private and independent infrastructure systems and services, environmental resources, and services and resources located in other communities.
- Open spaces, parks, and recreational resources provide for the social, civic, and recreational needs of the residents who live in suburban neighborhoods while also protecting and preserving natural resources and open space areas.
- Major employment and economic centers provide for the major economic needs of the county as they provide locations for large-lot economic uses that do not mix well with housing, commercial, park, and civic uses. These areas focus on industrial, research, warehousing, logistic, and transportation uses, but also includes minor amounts of commercial, service, and other uses needed by workers.
- Office business parks are suburban economic areas that provide the need of businesses and professional services in a campus setting. They are located within suburban communities are connected to nearby residential, commercial, and civic uses through well defined roadway network, transit, and bike and pedestrian system.

In addition to defining each of the suburban character places, this objective also explains how to improve the development patterns of the county's suburban places. Specifically, the objective identifies strategies for improving the connectivity, design, and character of each place. In doing so the objective seeks to establish opportunities for continued development and redevelopment of the county's suburban communities.

POLICY 1.3.1: Utilize suburban character area development principles to guide the form and use of the county's suburban communities:

- a. Support and protect existing viable suburban neighborhoods while promoting the redevelopment of older neighborhoods;
- b. Maintain and plan mixed-use centers to link together multiple neighborhoods and provide for the needs of the community residents;
- c. Convert declining shopping centers and commercial roadways into mixed-use centers and corridors that link to adjacent neighborhoods and public spaces;
- d. Design and construct new roadways and roadway improvements consistent and compatible with the development context of the area;

- e. Plan and develop an integrated public spaces system to link together new and established neighborhoods and connect adjacent suburban communities;
- f. Program and construct future utility projects consistent and compatible with the land use and transportation context of the area; and
- g. Utilize landscaping to soften the built environment and improve visual appeal of the county's suburban communities.

POLICY 1.3.2: Utilize suburban character area transportation principles to guide the provision of multi-modal transportation services that improve connections within and between the county's suburban communities:

- a. Utilize a connected network of neighborhood, collector, and arterial streets to link multiple neighborhoods and mixed-use centers;
- b. Provide for the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists by promoting street calming practices within neighborhoods, near parks, and by other pedestrian-oriented land uses;
- c. Introduce and expand trails and greenways to provide connections between neighborhoods, mixed-use centers, economic areas, natural areas, and parks;
- d. Utilize mixed-use centers to support a higher level of connectivity through building form and site layout and a complete street network;
- e. Encourage and support transit between the suburban communities, particularly between mixed-use centers, employment areas, and other major community resources and amenities; and
- f. Provide services in proximity to work and home in order to reduce vehicular miles traveled.

POLICY 1.3.3: Achieve the vision of well defined, easily identified, and well connected suburban communities through the following planning and development practices within suburban character places:

- a. Establish moderate to low level of density, intensity, and building form standards within the suburban character places;
- b. Improve the definition between urban and suburban and suburban and rural places through more defined separation of densities, intensities, and height standards, use of greenspace and parks to transition from one character area to another, and development of suburban mixed-use places;
- c. Promote the development of public spaces as amenities for use by the people who live, work, and visit the area;
- d. Support the development of well designed and residential neighborhoods that provide a variety of housing types and styles; and

- e. Provide for highly effective and valued public utility service system through well connected, well developed, and interconnected suburban communities.

POLICY 1.3.4: Promote the development of suburban character places through the following development practices and incentives:

- a. Facilitate the development of unique suburban communities through the application of community plans that address local concerns such as architectural design, transportation linkages, and desired public services and resources;
- b. Promote the unique character of suburban community by recognizing and protecting the historic resources and cultural attributes of each community;
- c. Support the development of suburban mixed-use centers in targeted locations within the suburban area by facilitating the development of mixed-use regulating plans, prioritizing places with established regulating plans for infrastructure, transportation, and public service programs;
- d. Support the development of suburban economic centers by protecting lands near essential transportation centers for economic development uses;
- e. Enable increased density within the appropriate locations through transfer and purchase of development rights that enable density to be bought or transferred into specifically targeted locations; and
- f. Establish suburban land use categories and mixed-use standards as part of the Future Land Use Element that have appropriate densities and intensity standards.

Staff recommends the above policies be added to the comprehensive plan as they establish the foundation for development and redevelopment of the county's suburban character places. The policies build off the discussion of suburban areas found in the EAR Chapter 2 on pages 6-7, as they establish:

- Character and form principles for the development of suburban places;
- Development practices that will create and define suburban places;
- Transportation practices that promote multi-modal transportation options to better link and connect suburban communities together; and
- Incentives that will promote the development of suburban places in targeted locations.

The implementation of these policies will enable the county to create urban places within targeted emerging communities and promote the redevelopment of established urban places.

OBJECTIVE 1.4: RURAL CHARACTER PLACES: Rural character places are areas of land with low population density, existing and evolving commercial agricultural operations, preserved open space, and natural environmental habitats. Rural character communities convey a sense of rural lifestyle including: farm lands and ranches, large lot or clustered residential development, ample wooded areas, open spaces, river fronts, and environmentally sensitive lands. The county's rural places are located along the edges of

the suburban places including—the rural places of Pine Island, Yucca Pen, North Fort Myers, Bayshore, North Olga, Alva, Buckingham, and Southeast Lee County.

- a. RURAL RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES: Rural residential communities are rural character places that feature a variety of large-lot homes including those located within the areas of North Fort Myers, Bayshore, North Olga, Alva, and Buckingham communities. The residential properties include estate homes, live-work homes with businesses that support the agricultural industries (e.g.: nurseries, horse stables, and farm stands), and clustered developments. Future planning efforts within rural residential communities will support the development of homes and residential properties in a very low density development pattern that supports and maintains the communities' rural lifestyle.
- b. RURAL ISLANDS: Rural islands are rural character places located near Pine Island Sound and include both undeveloped islands and islands with pockets of residential development. The undeveloped islands provide the county with natural habitats and help maintain the delicate coastal ecosystem. The developed islands include North Captiva, Cayo Costa, and Pine Island, which have low-density residential communities with a lifestyle focused on its coastal locations along with undeveloped lands, preserves, and agriculture. Future planning efforts of rural islands will continue to focus on supporting the area's unique coastal lifestyle, protecting its environmental lands, and maintaining its farming lands.
- c. AGRICULTURE COMMUNITIES: Agricultural communities are rural character places that feature active agricultural lands, farms, natural resource mines, and ranches with rural residential areas including North Olga, Alva, Buckingham, and Southeast Lee County. These communities play an important role in the county's overall economy as they provide opportunities to diversify the county's tourism and development based economy with food production, natural resource extraction, and innovative energy generating industries. Future planning efforts within agricultural communities will ensure that these places remain active and viable agricultural economic generators while continuing to provide the residents who live in these places a distinct rural way-of-life.
- d. NATURAL LANDS AND HABITATS: Natural lands and habitats are predominantly rural character places that protect and preserve vital natural resources, ecosystems, and habitats. Natural lands and habitats are dispersed throughout the county including those located in Yucca Pen, North Fort Myers, North Olga, Alva, Southeast Lee County, and along the coastline of the Estero Bay. They are essential to the county's overall environmental health, community wellbeing, and sustainability as they help protect water resources, mitigate flooding and erosion effects of tropical events and storms, and protect the county's eco-diversity. Future planning efforts will ensure that vital natural habitats and environmental lands are protected and preserved by identifying particular lands for protection or purchase through the county's land conservation programs.

Staff recommends the objective regarding rural character places be added to the comprehensive plan in order to define rural places, where they are located within the county, their character form and components, and how they are to be utilized in the future. The definition for each rural place includes a discussion of the unique qualities of each area so that they may recognize how they contribute to the county's conceptual framework. Specifically, the definitions explain the following:

- Rural places are unique areas of the county as they maintain and support agricultural economic businesses and environmental resources—including low population density, existing and evolving commercial agricultural operations, preserved open space, and natural environmental habitats. Rural character communities are based upon a distinct rural sense of place—characterized by a lifestyle that includes: farm lands and ranches, large lot or clustered residential development, ample wooded areas, open spaces, river fronts, and environmentally sensitive lands
- The key characteristics of the rural places are:
 - Rural residential communities are rural character places that feature low-density, large lot homes including estate homes, live-work homes with businesses that support agricultural industries (e.g.: nurseries, horse stables, and farm stands), and clustered developments. Current and future rural residential communities must recognize the surrounding agricultural operations and allow for the transportation, business, and land use needs of farming and ranches.
 - Rural islands are rural character places in both undeveloped islands and islands with small areas of development. The undeveloped islands protect the county's coastal habitats and delicate coastal ecosystem. The developed islands include low-density residential communities with a lifestyle focused on its coastal locations along with undeveloped lands, preserves, and agriculture. In order to ensure that the area's unique coastal lifestyle is supported, the county must remain committed to protecting its environmental lands and maintaining its farming lands.
 - Agricultural communities are rural character places that are focused on agricultural operations and support business such as farms, natural resource mines, and ranches. Planning efforts within these communities will recognize that agricultural communities are important to the county's economy as they diversify the county's tourism opportunities and promote economic business associated with food production, natural resource extraction, and innovative energy generating industries and require little in the way of services and infrastructure systems.
 - Natural lands and habitats are predominantly rural character places that conserve vital natural resources, ecosystems, and habitats. These areas must be a focus of future planning efforts as they are essential to the county's overall well-being and livability they help protect water resources, mitigate flooding and erosion effects of tropical events and storms, and protect the county's eco-diversity.

In addition to defining each of the rural character places, this objective also explains how to improve the development patterns of the county's rural places. Specifically, the objective identifies strategies for continuing to support and maintain the economic and natural viability of such area.

POLICY 1.4.1: Utilize rural character area principles to guide the form and use of the county's rural communities:

- a. Protect the existing rural character and economic viability of the area and thereby ensure that rural way of life is maintained for existing and future residents;
- b. Establish a low level of density, intensity, and building form standards within the rural character places;
- c. Create incentives for clustering that reduce the opportunities for large lot development and preserve additional agricultural and environmentally sensitive land;
- d. Reflect a rural level of service for infrastructure—including water and sewer utilities and stormwater facilities—within the rural area by not modifying the provision of these services for additional urban or suburban-scale development;
- e. Discourage the permitting and provision of private and independent infrastructure systems and utilities;
- f. Promote and support agricultural communities by encouraging agricultural production and agricultural uses;
- g. Support continued economic viability of agricultural and rural lands through coordination with the agricultural community to ensure that policy and regulations do not discourage agricultural use and reflect agricultural best management practices, technologies, and desired uses;
- h. Identify rural places where commercial agriculture is the most appropriate use and develop a set of planning tools that supports the continued viability of such places; and
- i. Promote local food production through community gardens and farm-to-table programs.

POLICY 1.4.2: Utilize rural character transportation principles to guide the provision of multi-modal transportation services within the rural area:

- a. Provide ease of connections to adjacent suburban and urban places;
- b. Provide for rural transportation needs and support the context of the rural community by not expanding the transportation levels of service to that which is anticipated within urban or suburban areas;
- c. Introduce and expand trails and greenways to provide bicycle and pedestrian connections between urban, suburban places, natural areas, and parks. Provide accommodations with minimal designated bicycling and walking facilities within the road right-of-way;
- d. Facilitate equestrian riding by evaluation of identified equestrian crossings and expanding designated equestrian trails;
- e. Encourage and support transit connections between the rural center and the county's other major centers; and
- f. Promote regional movement of goods on designated truck routes and farm to market transportation needs of commercial agriculture.

POLICY 1.4.3: Promote the development of rural character places through the following development practices and incentives:

- a. Facilitate the development of unique rural communities through the application of community plans that address local concerns such as rural economic and agricultural needs, architectural design, transportation systems, and desired public services and resources;
- b. Establish rural land use categories and standards for a rural mixed-use center with appropriate location, height, and form standards;
- c. Support the historic culture of the county's rural communities by utilizing the historic preservation programs to identify and protect historic buildings and resources;
- d. Promote the removal of density units from rural lands through the use transfer of development rights, purchase of development rights, and other market mechanisms;
- e. Provide additional incentives for the protection and preservation of farm lands and natural habitat lands through the use of such tools as farm land trust, conservation lands purchases, and other land bank programs; and
- f. Encourage a strong rural agricultural economy by promoting rural farm-based agri-businesses, alternative fuel ventures, and home-based businesses.

Staff recommends the above set of policies be added to the comprehensive plan as they establish the foundation for development and redevelopment of the county's rural character places. The policies build off the discussion of suburban areas found with the EAR Chapter 2 on pages 9-11, as they establish:

- Character and form principles for the development of rural places;
- Transportation practices that meet the context of rural places; and
- Incentives that will promote the continued viability of rural places.

The implementation of these policies will enable the county to support the character of rural places while continuing to promote and encourage innovations within the rural agricultural based economy.

GOAL 2: DESIGN CHARACTER AND DEVELOPMENT FORM OF MIXED-USE CENTERS.

Promote a more compact and connected pattern of development that supports efficient and cost effective infrastructure and service delivery. Facilitate the development of mixed-use centers at targeted locations where they can serve a variety of community needs including those related to housing, service, shopping, employment, civic, public space, and culture.

Staff recommends that the above goal be added to the comprehensive plan in order to implement the county's vision for mixed-use places. This goal defines the different types of mixed-use centers and corridors, guides the design and development of mixed-use places, and implements the findings and recommendations for mixed-use outlined in EAR Chapter 2 Vision Framework: A Sustainable Planning Approach.

OBJECTIVE 2.1: MIXED-USE PLACES AND DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES: Ensure the county achieves its vision for mixed-use places by facilitating the development mixed-use centers within identified and targeted mixed-use places Mixed-use places provide for the development of a variety of mixed-use centers and corridors that meet the specific needs of the local community by fostering mixed-use centers in a variety of locations and types throughout the county. Mixed-use places are located in targeted locations where they can help improve connections between surrounding land uses, provide the commercial, office, and business needs of the surrounding community, increase options for housing, employment, socializing, and transportation, and improve accessible to and through the community. There are five types of mixed-use centers within Lee County— Regional Centers; Community Centers; Neighborhood Centers; Rural Centers; and Mixed-Use Corridors.

- a. REGIONAL CENTERS. Regional centers are large, major destinations that serve the needs of the entire county and greater region such as transit hubs and major employment, government, commercial, and civic services and businesses. Regional centers are characterized by their large scale and size, high density and intensity building form, multi-modal transportation connections that connect the entire region, and highly-utilized public services and infrastructure system.
- b. COMMUNITY CENTERS. Community centers are moderately sized places located in the core of a community where they act to connect the economic, housing, educational, and recreational needs of the entire local community. Community centers are characterized by their moderate scale and size, moderate to high density and intensity building form, multi-modal transportation connections that link the surrounding community together, and highly-utilized public services and infrastructure systems.
- c. NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS. Neighborhood centers are small scale places focused on meeting the personal and business needs of the local neighborhood area. Neighborhood centers are characterized by their small scale and size, low to moderate density and intensity building form, multi-modal transportation connections that focuses on the needs of pedestrian and bicyclists, and highly-utilized public services and infrastructure system.
- d. RURAL CENTERS. Rural centers provide the services and residential resources needed to serve the needs of the rural community. Rural centers are characterized by their small scale and size, low density and intensity building form, multi-modal

transportation connections that provide transportation options within the center but are linked to the rural places via roadway connections, and private services and infrastructure system.

- e. MIXED-USE CORRIDORS. Mixed-use corridors provide for a more compact, pedestrian and transit-oriented pattern of development along the county's major transportation corridors. While mixed-use corridors vary in size and scale depending on the character and context of the surrounding area, they all work to enhance pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and automobile connections between existing neighborhoods, economic areas, park spaces, and civic resources. Mixed-use corridors can be especially effective in promoting the revitalization of existing strip commercial centers and improve connectivity throughout the county.

Staff recommends that the objective regarding mixed-use places be added to the comprehensive plan in order to define the different scale of mixed-use places, what are their character form and components, and how they are to be utilized in the future. The definition for each mixed-use place is based upon the discussion of mixed-use types found in EAR Chapter 2 pages 13 – 38. These definitions include a discussion of the unique qualities of each area and how they contribute to the county's conceptual framework. Specifically, the definitions explain the following:

- Mixed-use places contain a complementary mix of uses, promote livability and walkability, and provide housing, transportation, social and recreational, and economic options. While often thought of urban places, mixed-use places help define the center of suburban and rural communities and interconnect the county's neighborhoods and communities together.
- The key characteristics of mixed-use places as described in the objective will be:
 - Regional centers are mixed-use centers where the county intends to develop major economic centers and regional destination places as they provide for the economic, social, and cultural needs of the entire county. They are characterized by large size and scale with tall buildings, dense residential communities, intensive commercial areas, well integrated multi-modal transportation system, and highly utilized public infrastructure system.
 - Community centers are mixed-use centers that act as the core of urban and suburban communities. They are characterized by a development form that has a moderate scale and size, moderate to high density and intensity building form, multi-modal transportation connections that link the surrounding community together, and highly-utilized public services and infrastructure systems.
 - Neighborhood centers provide local neighborhoods a mixed-use place that meets the social, business and commercial, civic, and recreational needs of the local community. While typically larger in intensity and density than the surrounding neighborhoods, these areas are built in a size and scale based on the context of the neighborhood within which it is located.

- Rural centers provide a center for rural places with the services and housing resources needed by the agricultural-based communities. They are characterized by a small size and scale that is based on the design and character of the community for which it serves.
- Mixed-use corridors are economic centers that line major community corridors; however they are a more compact, better connected form of development than the typical strip-commercial corridors. They help link together the residential communities to multi-modal transportation—particularly on major transit routes—and provide connections between different mixed-use centers.

In addition to defining each of the mixed-use places, this objective also explains how the county can achieve its goal of establishing unique, distinctly identifiable urban, suburban, and rural places through the development of mixed-use places. The objective identifies how different types of mixed-use centers and corridors can meet specific county priorities, which underscores the need to focus future county efforts on the development of mixed-use places.

POLICY 2.1.1: Facilitate the development of mixed-use places by targeting appropriate locations for mixed-use centers on the conceptual county framework, utilizing the Future Land Use Map Mixed-Use Overlay to identify future mixed-use center locations, and applying the development standards established as part of the Compact Communities Code.

POLICY 2.1.2: Foster a balance of residential, economic, and community public space areas by utilizing the Future Land Use Map to direct where to place mixed-use places and how to establish appropriate mixed-use densities and intensities that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods.

POLICY 2.1.3: Incorporate a mix of housing types, and live/work options to provide opportunities for residents to walk, bicycle, or take transit to shopping, services, and employment;

POLICY 2.1.4: Utilize mixed-use centers to promote a diverse and viable economic climate by encouraging a mix of daytime and evening activities, businesses, and events through different land uses, building types, and civic facilities.

POLICY 2.1.5: Promote the revitalization of established development areas through mixed-use center development strategies that encourage the infill of underutilized properties, redevelopment vacant buildings, preservation of historic resources, and strengthening of existing community character.

POLICY 2.1.6: Create opportunities to retrofit single-use commercial and residential buildings, redevelop vacant and declining shopping centers and commercial corridors; and

adaptively reuse existing buildings by enabling existing buildings to add building space, expand the mixture of allowed uses, and change the current land use through the mixed-use overlay standards, development requirements, and administrative redevelopment procedures.

Staff recommends that the above set of policies be added to the comprehensive plan in order to explain that the county can utilize mixed-use places to achieve its future planning and development goal and vision. The policies are based upon the mixed-use general guiding principles outlined in the EAR Chapter 2 on pages 14 -16. Through these policies, the county establishes that it will prioritize the development of mixed-use places over other types of development as it recognizes that mixed-use place are key to the accomplishment of the county's conceptual framework. These policies will be supported by more detailed policies found with other plan elements, most particularly the Future Land Use and Capital Improvements Elements.

OBJECTIVE 2.2: COMMUNITY MIXED-USE DESIGN PRINCIPLES. Utilize community mixed-use design principle to help the county achieve its vision of establishing uniquely identifiable places that promote active lifestyles, diverse economic environments, and social interactions by working with local communities to develop mixed-use design plans.

POLICY 2.2.1: Support and enhance the overall character of the community by creating a design theme that considers the how the mixed-use center blends with the surrounding community through a concept that addresses:

- a. Architectural designs that relate new buildings relate to the architectural components found elsewhere within the community;
- b. Design and construction of landscape and hardscape features;
- c. Location, components, and accessibility of public spaces and parks;
- d. Accessibility and connectivity between different uses within the center and between the center and surrounding areas; and
- e. Overall design of the block, mixed-use center, and neighborhood.

POLICY 2.2.2: Promote places with a unique design, character, and identity, create memorable and positive impressions, help define different places, and help transition between places by ensuring local communities incorporate easily identifiable and highly visible gateways and focal points into the design of their mixed-use centers. Community gateways and focal point features enable communities to highlight local features and resources such through natural environmental features (e.g.: open space areas, green belts, wetlands, or park lands) and built environment features (e.g.: arches, signs, street vistas, building, statues, public art, or fountains).

POLICY 2.2.3: Establish and improve connections between land uses, buildings, and other community features and promote internal and community-wide compatibility by seamlessly

blending buildings and transitioning land uses, building designs, site location, and block structure through compatible massing and height standards and stepped down intensities and densities. Locate the largest buildings (as determined by the building massing, heights, intensities, and densities) in the core of the mixed-use center then transition outward with the most minimal buildings and structures located at the edge.

POLICY 2.2.4: As part of the effort to develop a local mixed-use center, consider how the streetscape supports the design and function of the center and surrounding community by considering:

- a. Location of active uses in relationship to neighborhood-oriented commercial uses (e.g.: small markets, retail shops, and cafes), public spaces and parks, and civic spaces;
- b. Design and connections of sidewalks, public areas, and signage as it relates to the design found elsewhere within the community;
- c. Type, size, function, and location of public spaces and parks such as courtyards, plazas, fountains, center parks, natural areas, and civic places;
- d. Placement of streetscape features including: lighting fixtures, benches, bike racks, bus stop shelters; and
- e. Size and location of the center's buildings relate to the sidewalk, street, public spaces, and surrounding neighborhoods;

POLICY 2.2.5: Support the development of a welcoming community environment within mixed-use centers by utilizing landscape and hardscape features to establish the basis for a local community's character and design; screen vacant parking lots and other infrastructure facilities; help transition the center to the surrounding development areas, and improve the compatibility between different land uses within a community.

Staff recommends that the above objective and policies be added to the comprehensive plan in order to identify and explain the design and form principles related to the development of mixed-use places. Like the policies in objective 1, these policies are based upon the mixed-use general guiding principles outlined in the EAR Chapter 2 on pages 14 -16. These policies help explain the unique design and form characteristics of mixed-use places. Through these principles, the county seeks to help explain how land use, transportation, parks and public spaces, and infrastructure systems practices are interrelated in the development of mixed-use places. This set of objectives and policies will be supported by more detailed policies in the following three sets of objectives and policies as well as policies found in other plan elements including Future Land Use, Transportation, Capital Improvements, Community Facilities, Parks and Recreation, and Community Health and Wellbeing.

OBJECTIVE 2.3: INTERCONNECTED LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION DESIGN. Integrate land uses with multiple modes of transportation to create an interconnected transportation mixed-use center design that decreases the number and length of vehicular

trips, facilitates transportation options, and provides opportunities for walking, biking, riding transit, and driving.

POLICY 2.3.1: Incorporate context sensitive, mixed-use design features that reflect the urban, suburban, or rural character of the surrounding area by designing streets that unify communities and integrate greenways and open spaces.

POLICY 2.3.2: Design mixed-use centers to support a higher level of connectivity through building form and site layout that allow easy access for all users and all modes (pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and drivers); provide options for making shorter trips; increase community safety through additional eyes on the street; and support an active streetscape with opportunities to live, work, and play in the same area. The connections link streets, pedestrian pathways, bikeway, and transit to local shopping, services, housing, parks, and other community resources, to adjacent neighborhoods, businesses, civic areas, and other mixed-use centers.

POLICY 2.3.3: Locate stores, offices, residences, public services, public spaces, parks and recreational resources within walking distance of each other to promote independence of movement; enable people to conveniently walk, cycle, or ride transit; reduce use of independent vehicles; and provide options to live, work, and play. A walkable distance is typically measured at ¼ to ½ mile with minimal physical and perceived barriers such as dangerous intersections, isolated or unsafe areas, heavy and fast vehicular traffic, vacant lands and parking lots, narrow sidewalks, and poor lighting.

POLICY 2.3.4: Emphasize the character and safety of the pedestrian and public realm by designing transportation infrastructure that supports the form and function of the mixed-use community through:

- a. Clearly defined, well lit, and shaded pedestrian connections, sidewalks, and pedestrian crossings;
- b. Bicycle facilities such as bike racks, bike lanes and signage; and bikeways;
- c. Transit facilities including shaded bus shelters, transfer locations, and bus signage;
- d. On-site parking located on-street or in the rear of buildings;
- e. Shared parking located in parking structures, behind buildings; and at the edge of mixed-use center areas;
- f. Establishment of new pedestrian connections between mid-block corridor development and adjacent neighborhoods;
- g. Concentrated vehicular access points to reduce curb cuts, driveways, and other potential conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles; and

- h. Use landscaping, hardscaping, and public spaces to help provide continuous street walls by screening empty spaces (e.g.: open parking lots, vacant building lots, and undefined open space areas) that break up the streetscape and cause pockets of inactivity.

Staff recommends that the above objective and policies be added to the comprehensive plan in order to guide the development and use of transportation resources within mixed-use places. The objective and policies are based upon the county's complete streets principals as well as the discussion of multi-modal transportation resources from pages 16 and 17 of the EAR Chapter 2. Through the implementation of these policies, the county will be able to guide its future transportation initiatives and realize its goals for creating a variety of transportation alternatives, particularly in established and emerging mixed-use places. These policies will be supported by more detailed policies found within the Transportation Element of this plan.

OBJECTIVE 2.4: PARKS, PUBLIC SPACES, AND OPEN SPACE WITHIN MIXED-USE CENTERS. Define the county's sense of place, promote its quality of life, and supports its community character by developing an array of park, public space, and open spaces within its future mixed-use centers.

POLICY 2.4.1: Foster an active mixed-use community by creating centrally located, accessible, and diverse opportunities for people to engage, recreate, relax, and play. Such places may include small public spaces with pocket parks, outdoor eating areas, courtyards, plazas, gazebos, fountains, and seating areas; passive park areas such as patios, terraces, and gardens; active recreational facilities with playgrounds, central parks, sport courts and fields, and event spaces; and natural open spaces, greenways, and urban trails.

POLICY 2.4.2: Promote the livability of mixed-use places by incorporating a variety of public spaces into the mixed-use development plan. Focus designs on: relating such areas to surrounding streetscape and built environment; blending areas together through seamless transitions; promoting the visual and physical connections to the street; using landscape and hardscape materials to demarcate different areas within the center; and linking adjoining areas together with urban greenways and trails.

POLICY 2.4.3: Identify appropriate locations to incorporate natural systems into the overall design of mixed-use centers by incorporating them into passive reaction parks; stormwater facilities; greenway areas; and open space areas.

POLICY 2.4.4: Support public-private partnerships that help plan, development, and maintain parks and public spaces within a mixed-use center. Examples of public-private partnerships may include: privately owned, publically accessible public space areas such as

courtyards, eating areas, and civic space; or publically owned, privately maintained plazas, event space, and outdoor dining areas.

POLICY 2.4.5: Utilize parks, public spaces, and green areas to help connect different land uses and amenities within mixed-use centers, unify the entire community, and transition mixed-use communities to the surrounding neighborhoods and business districts.

Staff recommends that the above objective and policies be added to the comprehensive plan in order to explain the importance of public spaces and parks to the form, function, and design of mixed-use places. The objective and policies supports policies found in the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element, particularly goal 2 which describes how the county can work with private development to create diverse public places and parks within mixed-use centers. Additionally, the policies reflect guiding principles identified throughout the discussion of the form and character of mixed-use areas found in EAR Chapter 2 on pages 14 and 15.

OBJECTIVE 2.5: Public Service and Infrastructure Systems. Maximize existing public infrastructure system and public services and minimize the need for new or expanded services by developing mixed-use centers in locations where services are provided easily and efficiently.

POLICY 2.5.1: Support the development of mixed-use communities by seeking opportunity to locate county facilities and buildings (e.g.: parks, recreational facilities, schools, police stations, libraries, government services, and other buildings and facilities that are accessed by the public) within mixed-use places.

POLICY 2.5.2: Coordinate the county's land use, public facility, and utility infrastructure planning efforts to ensure the county is able to deliver adequate levels of public services to mixed-use centers in accordance with the center's need for a highly utilized system.

POLICY 2.5.3: Focus capital improvement investments on the maintenance and provision of public services within the county's mixed-use places so as to: maximize the county's public investments; ensure public dollars are spent in the places where the majority of the citizens live, work, and play; promote the vitality of the county's mixed-use places; and support the continued market desirability of such places.

POLICY 2.5.4: Contribute to the overall design and character of mixed-use places by screening public infrastructure facilities from public areas and viewpoints. Mixed-use infrastructure systems should consider the location of service areas and mechanical/electrical equipment to reduce their visibility; landscape and hardscape screening that compliment the

area's architectural features; and types, styles, and design of trash and recycling enclosures, street furniture, and lighting features.

POLICY 2.5.5: Ensure the stormwater needs of mixed-use developments are provided by promoting innovative stormwater practices including shared stormwater systems, increased landscaped surface areas, and use of pervious materials, water-oriented civic spaces, and compact building patterns.

Staff recommends that the above objective and policies be added to the comprehensive plan in order to explain the role public services and infrastructure systems play in the development of mixed-use places. This is an important set of policies as it explains the unique nature of such systems in a more urban, mixed-use development pattern and lays the foundation for how the county will need to change and update its utility practices in the future. The policies are further supported by policies found in other plan elements, most particularly the Community Facilities, Capital Improvements, Coastal and Conservation Management, Future Land Use, and Community Safety and Wellbeing Elements.

OBJECTIVE 2.6 MIXED-USE INCENTIVES Prioritize the development of mixed-use places through incentives that facilitate the development and improve the marketability of mixed-use centers.

POLICY 2.6.1: Support the development of mixed-use centers by utilizing the community planning program to:

- a. Facilitate the development of regulating plans and other land development standards;
- b. Promote the understanding about mixed-use development and design practices;
- c. Identify appropriate locations for mixed-use centers within the various communities; and
- d. Provide examples of mixed-use development at scales that are appropriate to the community.

POLICY 2.6.2: Promote mixed-use developments through county initiated planning, publically funded infrastructure systems, administrative permitting, streamlined reviews, grant and program applications; and expanded building rights by evaluating the following development incentives:

- a. Increasing the allowable building space (FAR), density, permitted uses, and height standards for mixed-use projects;
- b. Enabling increased density within mixed-use places through transfer and purchase development rights that enable density to be bought or transferred into mixed-use development areas; and
- c. Decreasing the required amounts of parking, on-site stormwater retention, transportation roadway connections needed within mixed-use development areas;

- d. Adopting mixed-use regulating plans in target places that are able to be implemented through administrative processes;
- e. Enabling mixed-use projects to purchase additional density or transfer density into the area from identified rural places; and
- f. Giving mixed-use places priorities in grant applications for historic preservation, community planning, transportation and public service infrastructure; and neighborhood development programs.

POLICY 2.6.3: Prioritize mixed-use places by giving projects located within mixed-use places high consideration when reviewing and determining future budgetary, grant, capital improvement, and service projects.

POLICY 2.6.4: Promote the development of innovative financing and planning tools for mixed-use centers in targeted locations that have established regulating plans such as community redevelopment agency (CRA), municipal service benefit unit (MSBU); municipal service taxing unit (MSTU), tax increment financing (TIF), community development district (CDD), historic preservation trust funds, grants, tax increment financing, and other programs to help spur and finance the development of mixed-use communities.

Staff recommends that the above objective and policies be added to the comprehensive plan in order to identify and establish how the county can help facilitate the development of mixed-use places. Particularly, the objective and policies explain innovative development and planning practices and initiatives, capital improvement planning practices, and other public programs that can be used to encourage private developers to construct mixed-use places. These policies:

- Establish that the development of mixed-use places is a priority for the county;
- Recognize that the county has a role in encouraging the development of mixed-use places;
- Identifies specific program and practices the county can implement that will encourage mixed-use development; and
- Outlines mixed-use oriented practices for future planning and development efforts.

The policies are supported by others found in the Future Land Use, Communities, and Capital Improvements Elements of the comprehensive plan.

GOAL 3: COMPREHENSIVE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY.

Maximize public and private resources, support community wellbeing, and promote livability for current and future generations by ensuring all of the county's practices and programs are working towards achievement of the county's future vision.

Staff recommends that the above goal be added to the comprehensive plan in order to implement the county's vision for becoming a sustainable community with a highly effective local government. This goal articulates what it means to be sustainable and why such practices

improve the function and effectiveness of our local government and its development efforts. The goal expands upon the Sustainable Policy Directions for Lee Plan found on pages 39 to 49 of EAR Chapter 2 Vision Framework: A Sustainable Planning Approach.

OBJECTIVE 3.1: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT TOOL BOX. Establish a planning and development toolbox that integrates the county's land use, economic development, transportation, housing, historic preservation, parks, utilities, environmental and natural resources, and budget planning and development priorities and practices, promotes incentives for redevelopment and infill, and ensures collaborative working relationships.

POLICY 3.1.1: Adopt and implement land use management strategies that guide growth into developed areas, minimize development in undeveloped areas; and define urban, suburban, and rural communities. These strategies include:

- a. Land protection practices—e.g.: conservation easements, transfer of development rights, land trusts, open space set asides, wetland protection, and conservation lands purchases;
- b. Traditional, compact development forms such as mixed-use centers, infill, and redevelopment;
- c. Remediation and redevelopment of brownfield sites;
- d. Financial and regulatory incentives for mixed-use, infill, and redevelopment projects;
- e. Agriculture promotion efforts to maintain prime agricultural lands, encourage agricultural innovations, and promote the farming economy; and
- f. Environmental land stewardship programs that minimize development and infrastructure impacts on the ecosystem, native habitats, and natural resources.

POLICY 3.1.2: Support multi-modal transportation practices that minimize dependency upon traditional energy sources and promote clean air and energy efficiency by:

- a. Integrating land uses and promoting design that enable people to walk, ride bicycles, or utilize transit;
- b. Reducing vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled through compact, infill, and mixed use development;
- c. Encouraging alternatives to the drive-alone vehicular travel, including carpooling, walking, bicycling, and transit;
- d. Promoting renewable fuel sources and supporting infrastructure—e.g.: electric vehicle character stations;
- e. Designing local street to encourage pedestrian and bicycle use and discourage high speed traffic;
- f. Designing streets that support/enhance access between neighborhoods and to neighborhood-based commercial developments; and
- g. Ensuring there are affordable, efficient transportation alternatives for everyone, especially low-income households, elders, and others without access to cars.

POLICY 3.1.3: Provide for the needs of a multi-generational, diverse demographic community by supporting a wide variety of housing types that create and maintain a range of housing resource by:

- a. Encouraging and facilitating a range of housing options, price ranges, and types;
- b. Promoting the provision of permanent and temporary housing;
- c. Enabling both home ownership and rental opportunities; and
- d. Facilitating housing near places of employment.

POLICY 3.1.4: Support the development of highly livable places with unique character, strong community identity, and distinct a sense of place by promoting the county's historic attributes and culture by:

- a. Facilitating the preservation and renovation of historic properties through historic preservation programs, grants, and development assistance;
- b. Identifying key places where preservation and renovation of historic properties would anchor and promote redevelopment, compact design, and greater connectivity;
- c. Facilitating the conversion of older, economically distressed, or historically significant buildings to alternative uses such as apartments, live-work units, or public facilities through the implementation of adaptive reuse programs;
- d. Promoting local, state, and Federal historic preservation tax incentives, development programs, and reuse and adaption projects; and
- e. Revising the county's development standards and practices to provide standards to best redevelop and revitalize historic and other existing buildings to achieve sustainable outcomes;

POLICY 3.1.5: Maximize the benefits of prior investments in infrastructure and development and improve the performance, affordability and desirability of existing buildings by:

- a. Utilizing new technologies in conjunction with weatherization techniques to improve the use and function of older buildings;
- b. Establishing land development standards and practices that ease the use and redevelopment of antiquated plats, non-compliant properties, brownfield sites, and undeveloped subdivisions—particularly those located in urban character places as well as infill and redevelopment areas; and
- c. Developing community focused development projects to help spur and incentivize the development of local communities including tax increment financing, community redevelopment authorities, Compact Communities plans, municipal service taxing districts, municipal service benefits units, historic preservation districts, Neighborhood Stabilization Program, Neighborhood Building Program, MainStreet programs; and other innovative community planning practices.

POLICY 3.1.6: Support the health and vitality of the community and provide its citizens with a high quality of life through the development of parks, public spaces, and open spaces that:

- a. Are located within walking and bicycling distance to residential neighborhoods, employment centers, mixed-use places and activity areas;
- b. Incorporate local materials, native plants, and drought tolerant landscaping;

- c. Employ landscape and park maintenance practices that minimize use of pesticides, fossil fuels, and herbicide and reduce the use of mowers, edgers, and leaf blowers;
- d. Preserve and protect open space areas, conservations lands, wetlands, and other natural resources and native habitats;
- e. Support community-oriented activities such as urban gardens, community gardens, on-site composting of organic waste; and
- f. Protect and restore damaged natural systems and utilize stormwater facilities as community assets.

POLICY 3.1.7: Enhance visual interest, promote Lee County’s desired character, and conserve natural resources through landscape designs that feature native plants and materials that reflect the scale, texture, and colors of the surrounding areas and can weather the effects of Lee County’s tropical environment.

POLICY 3.1.8: Improve community access and usability of public services, facilities, and infrastructure systems while minimizing costs to deliver, maintain, and operate those public services and infrastructure systems by incorporating the most current energy efficient building and resource management practices including:

- a. Fix-it-first county practices that prioritizes upgrading existing facilities over construction of new facilities;
- b. Locating civic buildings and public facilities within existing communities rather than in greenfield areas;
- c. Identifying facility co-location opportunities that expand the use and management of publically owned facilities;
- d. Employing energy efficient practices that take use alternative energy sources, energy efficient products, and renewable energy practices;
- e. Maximize the use of natural resources though innovative waste reduction and recycling efforts; and
- f. Protect natural resources through practices that conserve water, use Florida-friendly plants, and employ non-toxic pest management systems.

Staff recommends that the above set of objective and policies be added to the comprehensive plan in order to enable the county to establish an integrated planning and development toolbox. The objectives and policies explain the planning and development tools that are needed to achieve the county’s future vision and how they are to be used to support one another. By implementing these tools, the county will be able to better integrate its land use, economic development, transportation, housing, historic preservation, parks, utilities, environmental and natural resources, and budget planning practices. The result of these efforts will be a more effective local planning and development program that is better equipped to achieve and implement the county’s new conceptual framework.

OBJECTIVE 3.2: RESOURCE EFFICIENCY PRACTICES. Promote resource efficient building, site planning, and development practices that reduce capital assets, maximize energy resources, and protect natural systems.

POLICY 3.2.1: Promote land use practices that reduce dependence upon traditional fuel sources, by promoting:

- a. Compact development that minimizes the need to drive and less impact on the environment;
- b. A mix of integrated community uses—housing, shops, workplaces, schools, parks, civic facilities—within walking or bicycling distance;
- c. Human-scaled development that is pedestrian-friendly and bicycle oriented;
 - a. Development oriented around transit resources;
 - b. Home-based occupations and work that reduce the need to commute; and
 - c. Locally-based agriculture, such as local agri-businesses and community supported agriculture, providing a nearby source of fresh, healthy local food while promoting rural economies.

POLICY 3.2.2: Promote sustainable business practices that reduce operating costs, improve the workplace, and are environmentally friendly by working with private businesses to:

- a. Reduce employee commuting costs by allowing for telecommuting or web-based meetings, promoting carpools or transit use, or locating business in mixed-use communities;
- b. Reduce business transportation by reducing product transport vehicle trips; utilizing alternative fuel vehicles, locating near markets, suppliers, and employing web-based business operation practices;
- c. Minimize facility site costs by locating in shared business facilities; promoting home-based businesses; and tele-commuting;
- d. Maintain healthy working environment through green building construction materials and cleaning products; minimal use of chemicals, pesticides, herbicides, and toxic products; proper disposal of chemicals and toxic products; and avoiding activities that emit waste or pollutants;
- e. Use recycled or by-products of other businesses that minimize the use of virgin raw materials;
- f. Promote recycling of waste materials derived from non-renewable, non-degradable resources;
- g. Build facilities that maintain natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation; minimize disruption of natural systems; and re-use processed water; and
- h. Develop and utilize innovative energy practices and resources.

POLICY 3.2.3: Incorporate building strategies that incorporate energy saving design and construction features, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and encourage conservation and use of alternative and renewable energy sources including:

- a. Solar-oriented site location;
- b. Heat island mitigation through shade trees and landscaping, heat reflecting, absorbing, or minimizing roofs, and cool pavements;
- c. Building materials that consume less energy to produce and transport, are chemical and toxic free, incorporate recycled products; and promote waste reduction.
- d. Reduction of building energy use through insulation; energy efficient appliances and building systems; and application of alternative energy sources;

- e. Landscape design standards that minimize pesticides and herbicides, and conserve water;
- f. Stormwater management that reuses and improves the quality of on-site run-off—e.g.: constructed marsh or wetlands systems; and
- g. Minimal impervious paving materials

POLICY 3.2.4: Blend the built and natural environment together to support the health of the natural environment and promote the county's quality of life by promoting landscape designs that:

- a. Incorporate drought tolerant plant materials and reclaimed water sources;
- b. Incorporate natural water features into stormwater resource plans;
- c. Utilize stormwater resources to mimic the design and function of natural water resources;
- d. Promote green design features; and
- e. Provide the built environment shade, visual appeal, and character.

POLICY 3.2.5: Encourage stormwater runoff development site design practices that promote the reduction of the amount of stormwater runoff by promoting alternative site design practices including:

- a. Reduced paving area—e.g.: reduced parking space widths, required number of parking spaces, and shared parking resources;
- b. Natural, pervious parking materials such as stone and gravel;
- c. Use of rain gardens, natural retention systems, and vegetative and stone swales to help improve the channeling and filtration of stormwater;
- d. Preserved natural areas;
- e. Drought tolerant landscaping;
- f. Infill and redevelopment practices;
- g. Compact forms of development—e.g.: cluster home and mixed-use.

POLICY 3.2.6: Protect groundwater sources, particularly in wetland and aquifer recharge areas, by:

- a. Limiting activities that are known to adversely impact such areas;
- b. Identifying and analyzing natural drainage features, man-made drainage structures, and impact of the proposed development on drainage and topographic features;
- c. Maintaining an inventory of wetland locations; and
- d. Utilizing conservation easements to protect vital resource areas.

POLICY 3.2.7: Encourage innovative infrastructure systems and approaches to the delivery of public utility services (e.g.: potable water, sanitary sewer, and solid waste) that support the county's natural environment and ecological health including:

- a. Infrastructure design strategies and regulatory practices that focus on pollution prevention, re-use and recycling;
- b. Sewage and septic treatment that discharges effluent meeting or exceeding federal drinking water standards while minimizing or eliminating the use of chemicals (e.g.: greenhouse sewage treatment facilities);

- c. Programs that recognize the "cradle to grave" costs of waste generation and disposal;
- d. Composting, reclaimed water, and greywater reuse systems;
- e. Cleaning, conserving, and reusing wastewater at or near the site.

POLICY 3.2.8: Promote the most efficient use of energy resources, values of environment assets, and need to protect, and promote the natural resources through community awareness and public educational programs.

Staff recommends that the above set of objectives and policies be added to the comprehensive plan in order to explain how the can establish and implement resource efficient land use planning and development practices to improve the county’s overall sustainability. The result of these efforts will be the use and implementation of practices that improve the county’s livability, design and form, character, and overall wellbeing. Thus ensuring that those things are unique to Lee County will remain for generations to come.

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

DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING: August 27, 2012

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

- 1. RECOMMENDATION:**
- 2. BASIS AND RECOMMENDED FINDINGS OF FACT:**

C. VOTE:

NOEL ANDRESS	
WAYNE DALTRY	
JIM GREEN	
MITCH HUTCHCRAFT	
RONALD INGE	
ANN PIERCE	
ROGER STRELOW	

