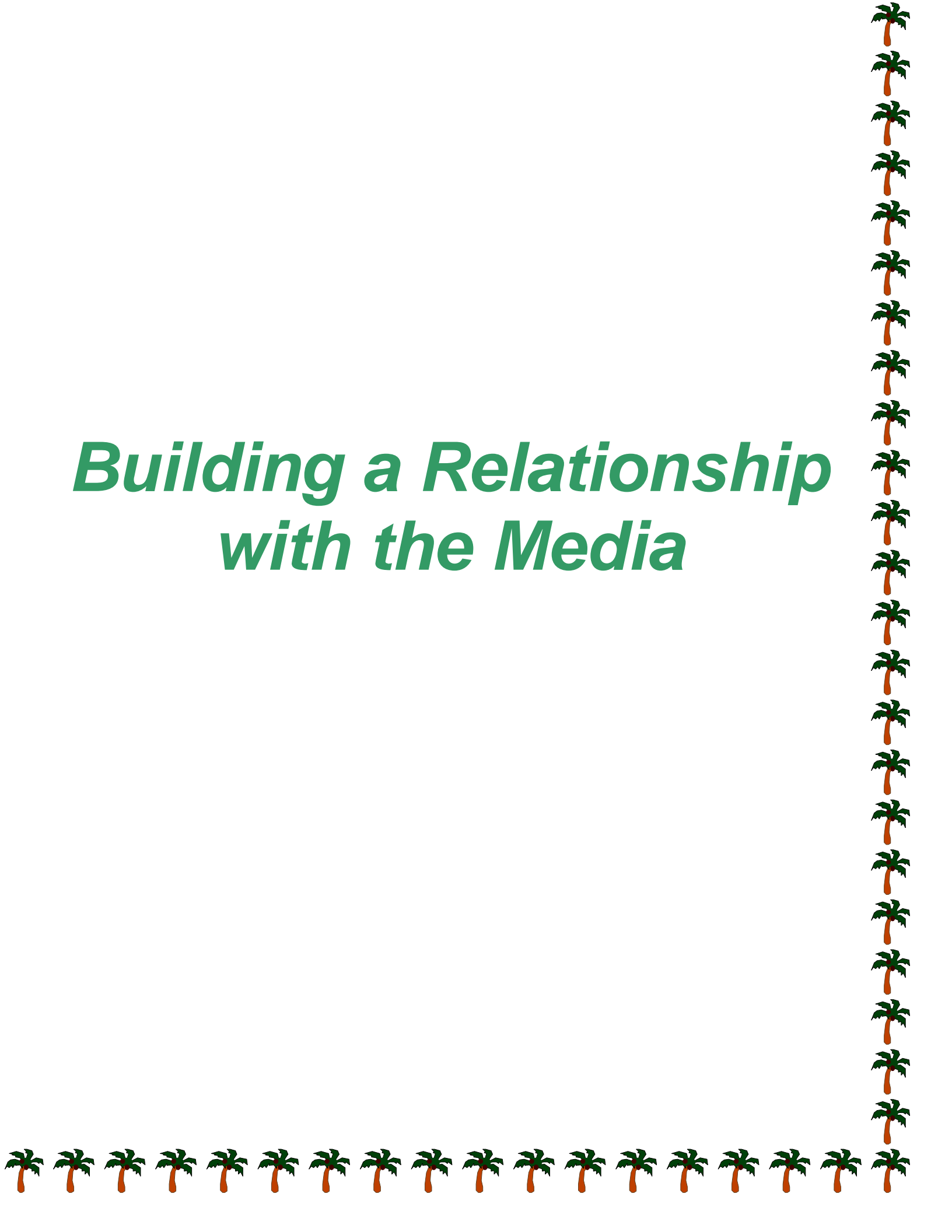


Building a Relationship with the Media



BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MEDIA

STAY INFORMED

No matter what business you are in, it is vital to stay informed.

Read your local newspaper every day so that you know:

- what kind of news your paper covers
- what issues are out there
- what your community thinks and feels about the issues

You should also take 15 to 20 minutes out of your workday to read national news. The better you understand the world around you and your organization, the better you can serve and communicate with them. Do Internet news searches using key words.

MONITOR THE MEDIA

Collecting clips is a necessary task. Whether you personally compile the clips from your local paper, you receive them through your FRA membership or you pay a monthly subscription to a clipping service (e.g., Burrells Luce and Newspaperclips.com), it is important that you are aware of what news is out there about your organization (specifically) and the sector in which your organization belongs (e.g., redevelopment).

Start a notebook of all the clips you collect, and organize them chronologically. Enter the clips into an electronic database. Include relevant information such as:

- publication name
- city of publication
- reporter's name
- date the news story ran
- title of the article or news report
- reporter's contact information (e.g., email and phone number)

In addition to creating a list of clips, make a list of friendly and unfriendly reporters, editors and columnists among your local media. When it comes time to send out a press release about an upcoming special event or a ribbon-cutting ceremony for a newly completed project, you'll want to know who will be receptive to your story and who will not. Also, knowing which reporters are both favorable and unfavorable to redevelopment can help you better monitor the media for opportunities to submit an op-ed piece or a letter to the editor.

Op-ed

An op-ed is your opportunity to make contact with the editorial page editors and/or columnists, and provide them with information and suggestions for their writing of an editorial or column in support of your cause. This approach can be invaluable to *you* and *your organization*. It can allow *you* to position yourself as an expert in the industry of redevelopment within your community. It can also get *your organization's* name and mission out into the public eye. It is important when crafting your op-ed to make it timely and newsworthy. Editors tend to look for the following:

- a provocative idea on any subject
- an opinion on a current issue
- a call to action on a neglected subject

Letter-to-the-Editor

Be alert for chances to get your message out. If your local paper runs a story about a topic that is relevant to redevelopment, send a letter-to-the-editor commenting on the story. You may also want to respond to an article that was critical to the subject, or perhaps a reporter who was misinformed.

When submitting a letter, be sure to include key messages and to follow the editor's guidelines.

RESPOND TO REPORTERS

If you want a particular reporter to know your organization exists, you have to let them know you do. It's only expected that in monitoring the media, there will be articles that spark your interest or please you to read them. Make use of these occurrences, and let the reporter know your thoughts. Every reporter likes to know that their articles are being read, pondered and appreciated. There may not always be a need to write a letter-to-the-editor, but you should definitely seize the opportunity to share your organization's thoughts on an article relevant to redevelopment. In doing so, you will also draw positive attention to your organization and assert yourself as an expert. The reporter will take note of your organization and begin to think of you as a well-informed expert in the redevelopment sector.

RESULTS

By building a relationship with your local media, you learn about them (e.g., who are the reporters talking about redevelopment, what is the paper's position on your cause, how do they like to be communicated with, etc.), and, in turn, you can teach them about your organization (e.g., what your mission is, what your key messages are, what benefits you are bringing to your community, how you can be reached, etc.).

CAPE CORAL MODEL

Lisa Pletincks, marketing manager of the Cape Coral CRA, has built strong relationships with their local media. In fact, the two local papers, *Cape Coral Daily Breeze* and the *Ft. Myers News-Press* have asked her to write a bi-weekly article on Downtown Cape Coral. Just one example of the benefits of building a positive relationship with your media.

Additionally, see the following article, "Downtown Dreams" that ran on the front-page of the Ft. Myers New-Press on August 20, 2006. This article is a direct result of Cape Coral CRA having established a positive relationship with the local paper and reporter, and the reporter being well-informed that Cape Coral CRA was planning these phenomenal projects.

COMING THURSDAY HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Our 12-page special section takes a closer look at the upcoming season. SPORTS

PREVIEW



Firecats fall in playoffs
Green Bay defeats Florida 60-47
in AFZ American Conference final. CI

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BONITA SPRINGS



■ Southwest Floridians attend the Orlando World Festival at Rinker Park in downtown Ocala. Rear properties of OMUS, 4 hold the key to Bonita's downtown rebirth. AD

FORT MYERS



■ It may look almost empty, but new projects are slowly invigorating downtown Fort Myers. Developers are bringing offices, restaurants and high-rise condos to the area. AD

DOWNTOWN DREAMS

Cape Coral is latest to envision an area where retail, homes thrive

BY PETS SKIBA
pskiba@news-press.com

CAPE CORAL

Imagine a couple in Fort Myers talking about a night out and enjoying downtown Cape Coral as the place to go.

Imagine a family in Bonita Springs talking about a shopping trip to a few nice stores — again in downtown Cape Coral.

If the vision of people leading a push to turn the Cape's downtown into a place to live, work, shop and play comes true, those visions could play out repeatedly in coming years.

Instead of people east and south of the Collier-Collier River talking about the Cape's "downtown," they could make it a second destination.

What is the vision? It's of a true downtown.

Where once there were dilapidated strip malls, the vision calls for three- to 12-story multi-level buildings with individual character and landscaping.

Plans call for a mix of condominiums, offices, retail shops, movies, sit-down restaurants and more such as a concert hall and hotel.

The architectural scheme could bring visions of Mediterranean seaside-city streets lined with cafes and people strolling, browsing, enjoying a Campari and getting coffee in various Internet connections.

Once it's finished, more than 20,000 people could live downtown in 450 acres along Cape Coral Parkway. The area runs from the Cape Coral Bridge on the east to Tulee Drive on the west and north on Del Prado Boulevard to Southwest 4th Street.

"I really like the heavy feel, the personal touch and the way that looks," said Cape Coral resident Jane Edwards, 41, while looking at an artist's renderings of projects planned in the area.

"It's like to go shopping at this."

■ See DOWNTOWN A1

MORE COVERAGE

■ Naples Shoppes HD: Another area's shops in building area. Find out how Naples turned to downtown project. AD

■ What's a community needs. Check out what one urban planner has as the essential for any downtown community. AD

■ Thousands of events. Follow the key moments in the history of Cape Coral's development. AD

■ Cape Coral projects learn from about the Gulf and plans for 11 downtown projects that will reshape the look of Cape Coral. AD

news-press.com/extras

■ Reader's forum: What would you like to see done in your downtown?



A view of Cape Coral Parkway looking east. Cape Coral, the fifth-fastest growing city in the country, is trying to turn its downtown into a favored destination in Southwest Florida.

Judicial races hard to judge

Candidates best gauged by lawyers who know them

BY BETTY PARKER
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Law County voters face an unprecedented number of judicial races on the Sept. 5 primary ballot, with most candidates making their first bid for office.

With candidates limited in what they can talk about — any issue that might occur before them on the bench is off-limits — and a relatively short campaign trail, voters scramble for any information they can get.

Critical factors for any judge are temperament and experience, experts say.

But how the average voter, with little experience in the legal system, can judge that criteria has most experts scratching their heads.

"What I want to know is what kind of person they are. Do they do all the hard work? Do they have patience? Can they handle the high pressure and constant of the people involved, and maintain order in the courtroom? Do they listen to others, or do they always have to say something?" former state attorney Joe O'Connell said.

■ See JUDICIAL A1

FGCU, Edison College nurture strong alliance

BY MATT COHN
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As its way long-term relationship, Southwest Florida's two bastions of higher learning have had disagreements, but they have continued to tie.

And they remain close after a decade of looking for ways to find a common cause.

Through regular conversations, administrators at Florida Gulf Coast University and Edison College — both of which were the same academic year this week — continue to look for ways to work together.

Last year, about one in eight students enrolled at Florida Gulf Coast University had transferred from Edison College, which has grown along with the university.

Florida's education system allows for relatively easy transfers from a non-traditional college.

■ See SCHOOLS A1

INSIDE

■ WEATHER
High 95, Low 75
Mostly cloudy with heavy storms, 70 percent chance of rain; complete forecast B1

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Naples offers blueprint to success

Upgrades boosted downtown area

BY PETE SCIBA
pete@news-press.com

It's easy to see why developers in Naples might be modeling the model for redevelopment in Southern Florida.

To people strolling, shopping, or dining a Saturday afternoon over a cappuccino at the 5th Ave Coffee Co., it's the slower pace around.

"Our company love it here. We always bring our guests to see 5th Ave," said Donna Hampton, 45. "I love to shop here. I do more shopping here than I do at home in Illinois."

"For a lot of people, this area takes the place of the old-time Italian piazza as a gathering place," said Bruce Hampton, 42. "It's a place to relax."

It wasn't always that way, said Lou Viasolo, vice president of Rimini City and a restaurateur.

"It's hard to imagine, but a few years ago this area was all blighted with a lot of empty storefronts," Viasolo said. "Those storefronts are now a work in progress."

Although the Community Redevelopment Area in Naples stretches for about 600 acres in the city's center along State Road 41, the 18-acre portion on either side of Fifth Avenue has been designated as downtown.

Since the downtown designation in 1996, more than 30 structures have been built, including a five-story, community art center and parking garage.

The downtown boasts more than 32,000 square feet of commercial space, 52 hotel rooms and 30 residential condominium units. Property values have skyrocketed.

"The only thing holding us back is our parking," Viasolo said. "We can't do any more redevelopment until more parking garages are built."

That leaves several shops along the street looking like refugees from 1960s single-story strip malls. The newer redevelopment buildings have a style that combines the pastel colors of the Mediterranean with a contemporary art deco look.

Architectural standards downtown limit the buildings to three stories.

"This here is the city for 28 years," said Jim Roth, manager of McCabe's Irish Pub & Grill. "With the new street's look, people are more inclined to casual dining. They like the pub atmosphere and walking to from the street."

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY

- **Don't have excessive drive-thru windows.** Drive-thru windows, or when clearing from a drive-thru, stop a traffic community or downtown usually include these:
- **It has homes, offices, retail shops, public transit, schools and parks all within a short walk. Residents are of many income levels.**
- **There are no walls, multi-lane or high-speed roads within a central area. If there is, it is one-way streets, one-way roads or toll-free.**
- **Stores are walkable, with few if any more than three lanes and low limit on on-street parking.**
- **There are clean walk or public systems and paths.**
- **Restaurants are locally owned. A few have ethnic cuisines.**
- **Public transit is frequent and easy to use.**
- **A bicycle city has multiple, 10-foot or 12-foot bike lanes.**
- **Bicyclists are abundant, and the without a car is possible and affordable.**
- **Parking is available in garages, not street level lots.**
- **A bicycle city has 100 or more miles from each location to emergency services, but flowers, books and bookstores.**



■ Dave Black, left, is one of the owners of Best, Bites & Breads, a place to buy supplies to craft jewelry. The business is set to open soon along Cape Coral Parkway. Black discusses sign-placement options with project manager Red Durlacher.



■ Donna Henriques, 53, left, owner of Donna's Cards and Gifts, and Marie Sweeney, 73, owner of Milton St. Barbershop, talk during a break recently in Cape Coral. The two own businesses in the Milton Plaza. Sweeney said about the possible redevelopment of downtown Cape Coral: "I think it will be nice, just what it would be done tomorrow."

DOWNTOWN

Continued from A1

place. As long as it isn't big skyscrapers."

Developers already have invested millions in land acquisition.

Stouten buildings such as Conrado Terrace, a four-story, 30-condominium project with 20,000 square feet of office and retail shop space on the ground floor, could be up in a couple of years.

More than 10 projects, including residential condos, offices and retail spaces, are in the process of getting permits or ready to begin construction.

The goal is to give people opportunity to live and work in the area.

"I think they'll want to have all agencies coming downtown," said Cape Coral resident John Jones, 75. "You'll want to keep younger people from going to Fort Myers and spending their money."

Most new downtown residents probably won't be retirees, city officials have said.

"It makes sense to have people of all ages who work here," said Cape resident Mark Heland, 48. "It is about having a vibrant downtown."

Using the city's Economic Development Department rate of thumb for number of jobs per square foot of office space, the 120,000 square feet of offices planned in one project alone could bring in 400 jobs.

"With what we have coming to the downtown, we can offer hundreds of jobs in offices along with shops and residential areas," said Suzanne Karbas. She heads the Community Redevelopment Agency, the organization that oversees the area's pending efforts.

"It will all be within walking distance of buses and free parking," Karbas said. "It will look beautiful."

The Cape remains the 46th fastest growing city in the country behind El Paso, Calif., North Las Vegas, Nev., Port Lacy and Gilbert, Ariz. The closest city to the Cape was Moreno Valley, Calif., at sixth.

City officials estimate Cape Coral's population has passed 152,000, and it

continues to add about 10,000 per year. Growth in the Cape has created a market hungry for office space, shopping and restaurant developments. That demand is driving the downtown redevelopments.

"We have a plan. We have willing investors. We have willing customers," Karbas said. "This is just a pipeline. It is a pipeline investment."

A new wave of downtown projects also could add 200 jobs from increased property tax values.

"Business real estate can escalate in market value without limitations, unlike a homebased residence," said Mike Jellison, Cape Coral director of economic development.

Homebased residences have a per-acre cap on how much assessments can be raised in one year. Business projects has no cap.

Cape Coral will benefit, too, from sales tax collected from shops, restaurants and other businesses.

In 2005, city government received about \$2.5 million from the sales tax, officials expect to tap \$10 million in 2009.

A downtown downtown has other financial benefits. It would mean people could live and play downtown at a time when gas prices cost \$3 per gallon and it's \$2 in tolls to cross the bridge to and from the Cape.

CURBING BLIGHT

In addition to keeping people on the Cape side of the bridge, a growing downtown would prevent blight, Karbas said.

Blight in Cape Coral isn't bounded by low-income, burnt-out Chevies and vans covered with graffiti.

It's broken sidewalks and curbs, head-on street layout, ungaraged parking, aging businesses, inefficient utilities and low property values.

Cape Coral's downtown might become official, according to a City Council vote, 20 years ago. To do it, the city formed the Community Redevelopment Agency.

The agency started small, it launched a street landscaping program, helped widen Cape Coral Parkway and began

to court developers.

An outdated bus garage for housing, offices, restaurants and amenities. Major projects have become realistic.

Examples include the \$23 million Village Square project on Cape Coral Parkway and Southwest Eighth Court and the \$4-acre, more than 800 million Plaza at Victoria off Cape Coral Parkway at Atlantic Court.

Village Square plans 136 residential condos, retail shops and professional offices with more than 1,000 parking spots.

Plaza at Victoria's plans call for a hotel, cruise theater, a concert facility and maybe a canal with gondolas to accompany its condos and offices.

Other housing office and retail projects could add about 1,000 residential condominiums and about a million square feet of office space and retail shops.

More projects are expected to arrive with residents on the top floors, offices below, parking on lower floors and stores in front of the garages holding them from the street.

Other developers such as Dave Nagel have plans for smaller properties. Nagel's Conchaco Terrace at Conchaco Parkway and Southwest 47th Terrace proposes 20,000 square feet of offices and shops with 80 residential condominiums above the businesses.

The Conchaco Terrace site sits next to Elmer Zabus's recently completed Hampton Inn.

"This could be the way development continues in the downtown," Zabus said. "One project attracts another until the area is complete."

"Everyone wanted for the hotel to come out of the ground to see if the CEA was serious," Zabus said. "Once we get that done, Dave (Nagel) jumped in. One development will bring another and they will bring more in over the next five years."

Developers and officials all said the rate to build a downtown is more of a pig than a grain.

"If most of the half-drawn projects we have posted on our walls are finished in five years, I'll count it as a job well done," Karbas said. "It's 99 percent sure they'll be built."

TIMELINE

- 1959 Gulf American Land Corporation builds eight mobile homes. The highest price, \$15,250 for a three-bedroom, two-bath home. Lurline becomes open.
- 1960 Cape Coral Shopping Plaza breaks ground. Home of Olive Sauer's Supermarket and a store of Big Boy. Naudin Motel opens. Parking lot opens.
- 1962 First bus station and Boney Road. Cape Coral Bridge is built.
- 1962 Tacht and Karpach Out opens. First United Presbyterian Church opens.
- 1963 U.S. Post Office opens at 47th Street.
- 1964 Cape Coral Beach opens.
- 1986 Cape Coral City Council declares the downtown area Historic City Council opens in front of Community Redevelopment Agency.
- 1987 First redevelopment area adopted. First land for development funding established.
- 1994 City Council approves the Community Redevelopment Agency Board of Commissioners.
- 1995 Redevelopment agency convenes Big Meeting in landmark building. Redevelopment commission.
- 1995 Street landscaping along Cape Coral Parkway begins first phase.
- 2000 Street landscaping along Cape Coral Parkway begins second phase.
- 2002 Community Redevelopment Plan prepared by Doner, Kutz & Partners. Bus transfer station completed.
- 2003 Redevelopment Area approved by city council. 402-acre parcel owned by Cape Coral Development Team. The area along the west side of Cape Coral Parkway to the Cape Coral Bridge at the west. A section runs north along 1st Street. Southwest to Southwest 44th Street.
- 2003 Cape Coral Parkway widening completed.
- 2005 City Council adopts the Community Redevelopment Plan. Declares the area into three districts. The area along the west side of Cape Coral Parkway to the Cape Coral Bridge at the west. The plan also includes the bridge and the area to the west of 12 miles.
- 2006 Hampton Inn, four-story, 75-room hotel at 47th St. 47th Terrace opens. It is the first hotel to open in the city's 27 years.
- 2006 United Commercial Bank 12.1 million residential and office redevelopment building at 47th St. 10th Place completed.

PHOTOS BY JENNIFER WOODRUFF FOR THE NEWS-PRESS

The future of Cape Coral's downtown

Cape Coral committed itself in 1986 to turning a blighted area into a vibrant downtown where residents could live, work, shop and be entertained. The market for the emerging downtown didn't arrive until 2000 and the once-blighted area began to be rebuilt as Cape Coral's heart. The market continues to arrive to the tune of a reported 10,000 new residents a year.



1. Cape Villagio

Location: East of 5th Street between Southwest 47th Street and 48th Lane
Size: 4 acres
Description: 200 residential condominiums and 200,000 square feet of commercial and office space with four parking garages. Amenities such as pool, fitness center and meeting rooms planned. It has a view of the Caloosahatchee River to the east. Mediterranean modern architecture.
Players: Cape Real Estate LLC, developer
Cost: \$200 million
Status: In permitting process



2. Village Square

Location: 13 acres north of Cape Coral Parkway between Southwest Eighth Court and Southwest Ninth Place
Size: 130,000 square feet
Description: 80 condominiums, office, retail shops and restaurants. Mediterranean modern architecture.
Players: Downtown Village Square LLC, Miami Development LLC
Cost: \$120 million
Status: Conceptual stage

Newly finished projects such as The Hampton Inn and Orchid Commons became the barbingens of hotels, movies, condominiums, offices and multimillion-dollar projects coming online through the city planning and permitting process.



3. Coronado Terrace

Location: 605 Coronado Parkway
Size: 28,500 square feet
Description: 60 residential condominiums, office and retail space, Mediterranean modern architecture.
Players: Diamond Reef Associates LLC
Cost: \$17 million
Status: In second review with city planning department



4. Terraces at Rosa Vista

Location: 452 S.E. 47th Terrace
Size: 22,250 square feet office, retail and restaurant building, Mediterranean modern architecture.
Players: Kue and Mankie Construction
Cost: More than \$14 million
Status: Building permits issued, but after commercial ground-breaking in construction.



5. Piazza di Venezia

Location: 14 acres south of Cape Coral Parkway between Coronado Parkway and 5th Street
Size: 80,000 square feet of restaurants and offices, restaurants, a convention center, 20 acres more flexible parking garage and 20 acres held, set to be 12-story buildings.
Players: RTI Development
Cost: In excess of \$300 million
Status: Conceptual stage



6. Leoni restaurant building

Location: 955 Miramar Ave.
Size: 16,000 square feet
Description: Restaurant, office and residential building, Mediterranean modern architecture.
Players: Aventura Capital
Cost: No estimate available
Status: In second review with city planning department



7. Huggins Building

Location: 815-827 Miramar St.
Description: 60,000 square feet retail space, 30,000 square feet office space and 1,000 square feet private club, Mediterranean modern architecture.
Players: Ray Huggins
Cost: No estimate available
Status: In concept stage



8. Chamber of Commerce

Location: 2551 Cape Coral Parkway
Size: 8,000 square feet
Description: Office and welcome center at the entrance to Cape Coral just west of the Cape Coral Bridge. Replaces current Chamber of Commerce office.
Players: Cape Coral Chamber of Commerce
Cost: No estimate available
Status: Under 900 review in permitting process



9. Cape Vincent

Location: 127 Cape Coral Parkway on 5th Street
Size: Eight acres
Description: 40,000 square feet of offices, retail and restaurant space with 236 residential condominiums, 12-story buildings, Mediterranean modern architecture.
Players: VIK Development
Cost: No estimate available
Status: In concept stage



10. Hampton Inn

Location: 428 S.E. 47th Terrace
Size: 75-room hotel
Description: First hotel to open in Cape Coral in 20 years, Mediterranean modern architecture.
Players: Cape Hotel Suites LLC
Cost: \$6.9 million
Status: Open for business



11. Orchid Commons

Location: 4208 S.E. 5th Place
Size: 11,800 square feet
Description: Office and retail space on first floor, residential condominiums on second floor, Mediterranean modern architecture.
Players: David Davis, builder/owner
Cost: \$1.5 million
Status: Completed, occupants expected to move in at end of August