

An aerial photograph of a waterfront park in Fort Myers, Florida. The park features a large, rectangular water feature with a central fountain spraying water upwards. The water feature is surrounded by a paved walkway and a low stone wall. Palm trees and other tropical plants are planted along the walkway. In the background, a marina with several boats is visible, along with a city skyline across the water. The sky is filled with large, white clouds.

2012

An Annual Report

Fort Myers CRA
Community Redevelopment Agency

Welcome to

Fort Myers CRA

Community Redevelopment Agency



The Fort Myers Community Redevelopment Agency is pleased to present its 2012 Annual Report. Despite the ongoing recession and continued drop in property tax values (including tax increment revenues), the Agency is moving forward in revitalizing the City's fourteen Redevelopment Districts to create a world-class city where people may live, work, play, and invest.

Some of 2012's redevelopment success stories include:

- Construction began on phase one of Downtown Riverfront Development, the Downtown River Basin
- Stabilization was completed on McCollum Hall, followed by a Development Agreement for McCollum Place, a key project in the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Boulevard District
- Efforts moved forward in attracting a Downtown convention hotel adjoining Harborside Event Center and three signature restaurants on the Downtown riverfront
- A total of \$170,000 in grant funds were awarded to several commercial property owners and businesses, resulting in \$4,733,615 in private investment and 85 new jobs in the Fort Myers community

The Southwest Florida Enterprise Center, a business incubator overseen by the CRA, continues to provide affordable space and business services to start-up ventures.

The Agency would like to express its appreciation to the Mayor and City Council, the City Manager and City staff, the Board of County Commissioners and County staff, and our State and Federal elected officials, for their assistance and support in the revitalization of our community.

Sincerely,

Teresa Watkins Brown, *Chairperson, Community Redevelopment Agency*

Dr. Gerald Laboda, *Chairperson, Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Board*

Southwest Florida Enterprise Center, 3901 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, Fort Myers, FL 33916 • (239) 321-7085 • www.swflenterprisecenter.com
Fort Myers Community Redevelopment Agency, 1400 Jackson Street, Suite 102, Fort Myers, FL 33901 • (239) 321-7100 • www.cityofmyers.com/cra

Fort Myers Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)



Teresa Watkins Brown
Chairperson



Levon Simms
Vice Chairperson



Forrest Banks



Michael A. Flanders



Randall P. Henderson, Jr.
Mayor



Thomas C. Leonardo



Johnny W. Streets, Jr.

Fort Myers CRA Advisory Board



Dr. Gerald Laboda
Advisory Board Chairperson



Kirk Beck



Erma Boyd



Raymond Campbell



Bruce Grady



Bernard McGovern



Ron Weaver

Agency Summary

The Fort Myers Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) was established in 1988 as a dependant special district and is governed by the Mayor and City Council in their role as CRA Commissioners. The CRA manages the city's redevelopment areas, Enterprise Center and parking operations.

The Southwest Florida Enterprise Center (SWFEC) was established in 1988 by the City as a business incubator. The mission of the Center is to help startup or early-stage businesses succeed by providing technical assistance and a physical location from which they can operate. Initially the Center was operated by the City's Community Development department, but in 2002, oversight of SWFEC was transferred to the Community Redevelopment Agency. Although directed by the CRA, SWFEC is funded by rental income and the City's General Fund and it does not receive tax increment funding, with the exception of occasional special purpose grants from the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard district in which the Center resides.

The Redevelopment Division, originally known as the Downtown Redevelopment Agency (DRA), was created in 1984, at the request of Councilwoman Veronica Shoemaker, to combat the deteriorating conditions within the downtown commercial area. Originally established as an Independent Special District, the City Council appointed itself the governing body of the City's Community Redevelopment Agency, under the auspices of Florida Statute Chapter 163, in 1988, and the DRA then became a division of the CRA. The role of the DRA was expanded in the early 2000s to manage the City's thirteen other redevelopment districts. To better reflect the Agency's redevelopment efforts throughout the City, the name was updated to Fort Myers Community Redevelopment Agency in keeping with the naming conventions of similar agencies around the state. The original governing body continues to serve as Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Board.

The Agency, along with the City's Community Development Department, prepares plans for the revitalization of each district and coordinates the implementation of the plan's recommendations. Tax increment funds generated by each district, combined with other funding sources, are used to upgrade the public infra-structure and to stimulate redevelopment. The Agency's motto, "New Direction – New Energy – New Life," aptly describes the desired outcome for the redevelopment program. The plan provides the "New Direction" for the future of the neighborhoods and commercial corridors; the "New Energy" is created by the extensive citizen and business involvement in creating the plan; and the "New Life" results from implementing the plan to create viable commercial and residential neighborhoods.

The CRA staff also manages the downtown parking operations through a contract with a national parking company. A dynamic parking program is critical for the continued growth and success of the downtown redevelopment district and the CRA has the largest stake in the program, so it was logical for the CRA to oversee parking on a daily basis. Despite its organization structure, the parking fund remains a City Enterprise Fund and falls under the jurisdiction of City Council.





Downtown River Basin

2012 Highlights

Began construction of the River Basin project, the most innovative and unique feature of the Downtown Riverfront Development. This 1.4 acre fully-seawalled Basin will provide storm water mitigation for 15 acres of vacant land; add waterfront property for hotel, retail and restaurant development; and symbolically return a portion of the waterfront to its historic shoreline, 2 blocks south of the present day shoreline.

Revised the Fort Myers Community Redevelopment Agency's Landscape/Façade grant program to spread grant funds out to more businesses, and clarifying the CRA's, City's, and Applicant's responsibilities.

Extended the Century Asset Management/South Trail Shopping Center Landscape/Façade Grant to finish negotiations with the City regarding any necessary remaining improvements. Total private investment was \$296,000 and will result in 40 new permanent jobs.

Financed Roots Heritage Urban Farm (RHUF) \$5,250 for fencing to enclose an additional 5 acres at the Southwest Florida Enterprise Center, doubling the size of the existing farm. The farm allows youth and low-income community members to be trained in agriculture, horticulture, and landscape, and created a local farmers' market.

Awarded a \$10,000 Development Assistance Grant to Miracle Plaza FM, LLC, to assist in the development of landscape and façade upgrades. The incentive resulted in a private investment of \$225,000.

Enterprise Zone Expansion – Through the efforts of the Economic Development Office of Lee County and the Enterprise Zone Board, the City of Fort Myers was able to expand the Enterprise Zone (EZ) to include the Downtown Redevelopment Area. Currently, six of the City redevelopment areas fall within the boundaries of the EZ. During FY2012, the Enterprise Zone attracted 432 new jobs and provided refund incentives totaling \$96,679 from private investment of \$1,661,162. The EZ offers a wide variety of tax refunds, credits, and exemptions for qualifying businesses. For additional information on the Enterprise Zone incentives, contact Sue Noe at the Office of Economic Development (239) 533-6812.

2012 Highlights

Awarded a \$50,000 Landscape/Façade grant to GRW Associates/Orthopedic Specialists of Southwest Florida, followed by a \$5,000 Development Assistance Grant for a plan to unify the landscaping between their current building and their new surgery center. The incentive resulted in a private investment of \$2,623,615 and the creation of an estimated 130 new permanent jobs.

Funded Lee County Black History Society \$960 to sponsor the *Holiday in the Park* event in Clemente Park, held on December 10, 2011. This gathering helped to unify the neighboring community as well as promote the facilities available in the park, newly-revitalized in 2011.

Identified Cleveland Avenue districts priorities in this order to make the most of limited TIF funds:

1. Cleveland Stormwater Compensation Detention Basin Project at the Fort Myers Golf Course, subject to findings of cost benefit analysis from the consultant
2. Landscape/Façade Grants
3. US 41 Corridor median Improvements from Colonial Boulevard to Boy Scout Drive
4. Community policing

These priorities will result in receiving stormwater compensation credits that can be assigned or sold to property owners redeveloping parcels along the corridor; enhancing the quality of a project, its curb appeal and ultimately property values along Cleveland Avenue; approve the aesthetics and urban image of this portion of the district to positively impact business retention and recruitment efforts; and providing an enhanced level of police service to reduce crime and increase the public perception of safety in the corridor.

The Southwest Florida Enterprise Center Foundation introduced a 2-week Entrepreneur Summer Camp for kids, attended by 15 middle and high school students; SWFEC hopes to involve elementary school students at some stage of the program.





McCollum Hall Stabilization

2012 Highlights

Completed stabilization of McCollum Hall. Stabilizing of the walls and roof was necessary to keep the structure intact while final development of the historic hall takes shape. Subsequently entered into a Development Agreement of McCollum Hall with Urban Development Solutions, Inc. Once completed, McCollum Hall is projected to create 75 jobs, 43 of which will be permanent, and introduce one restaurant, up to five retail spaces, and a multi-use event space to the community.

Won the 2012 International Making Cities Livable (IMCL) Walkable Neighborhoods award for Fort Myers Downtown Streetscape, ranking first for the inviting, healthy environment created in its dense urban core. This worldwide recognition provided instant publicity to potential international businesses and denizens looking for a beautiful and healthy community to make their home.

Approved reestablishing the base year for Central, East Fort Myers, and Dunbar/Michigan redevelopment districts. Property values for these districts are substantially below the base year property values so no TIF funds can be generated to help redevelop the areas; resetting the base year to current lower values will help generate TIF for redevelopment programs and projects.

Paid \$10,000 for an upgraded electric security entry gate for the Southwest Florida Enterprise Center through the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. district's Redevelopment Trust Fund and Maintenance line. The gate controls access and protects the tenants who have property within the individual business facilities at the Center.

Supported over 60 downtown special event days during FY2012 through the River District Alliance (RDA), ArtFest Fort Myers, and provided funds for cultural venues like the Florida Repertory Theatre and Florida Arts, Inc./Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center. Thousands of patrons visit the area for these functions and become restaurant and retail customers to the surrounding local businesses.

2012 Highlights

Awarded a \$50,000 Landscape/Façade Grant to City Center 41; this follows previous grants for portions of the same property. Total private investment was \$1,895,000 and resulted in an estimated 50 new permanent jobs.

Designed Educational Signs to be placed around the new River Basin project in the Downtown District, paid by the second year installment of Waterfronts Florida Partnership Program funds. These five signs will further enhance the attraction of the Basin area and Riverfront by enlighten visitors on the ecological benefits of the water feature they encircle.

Designed Fort Myers River District Self-Guided Tours booklets, containing tour directions, information, and photos of 15 pieces of public art and 32 historic buildings in the Downtown (River) District core area, and distributed free of charge and on the internet. These provide cultural resource information and direct visitors to the City's core business section to interaction with area restaurants, retail shops, services, and attractions.

The Southwest Florida Enterprise Center (SWFEC) assisted several new or start-up businesses by providing affordable space from which to run their businesses. By July 2012, office space in the Center was over 85% occupied, while 70% of the facility's warehouse space was leased. Offices were leased to Flora Hamilton Roberts Foundation, Franco Car Sales, Inc., GML Enterprises, Hispanic American Citizens Council, K & C Welding and Ornament, Lisa's Auto Sales, and Source of Light and Hope. Warehouse space was leased to Applied Physics, Franchild, LLC, d/b/a Bee Authentic, Franco Car Sales, Inc., Laguerre Underground Utilities, Massive Technologies, Inc., Promised Land Furniture, S & M Auto Repair/Richardson Construction, Source of Light and Hope, and West Lawrence School of Nursing.

City Center 41



CRA Assets & Liabilities

Audited Financials as of 2/28/2013

Assets

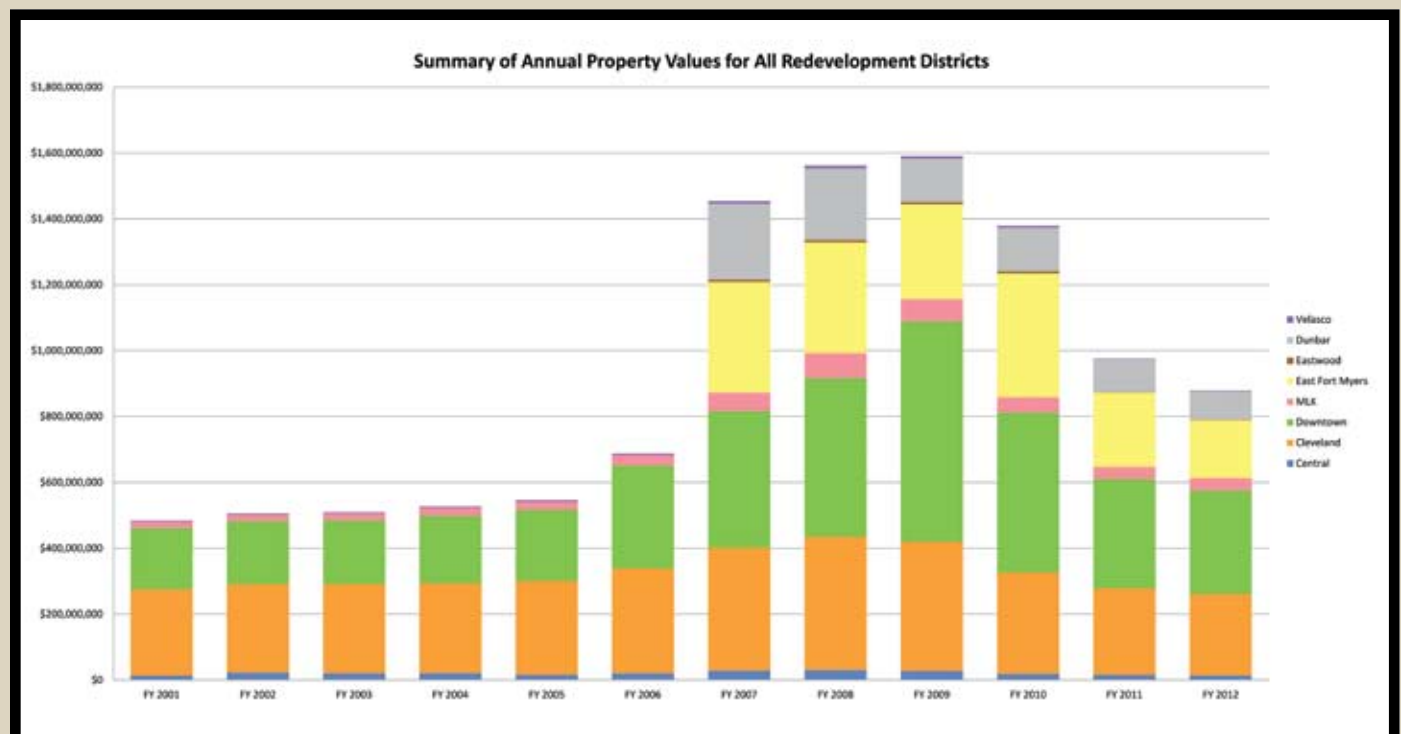
Description	Amount
Cash and cash equivalents	\$3,371,525
Investments	1,220,786
Accounts receivable, net	78,050
Interest receivable	7,157
Due from other governmental agencies	-
Prepaid items	14,731
Notes receivable	-
Allowance for notes receivable	-
Advances to other funds	200,000
Assets held for resale	419,457
Total assets	\$5,311,706

Liabilities

Description	Amount
Accounts and contracts payable	\$16,803
Accrued and other liabilities	7,020
Due to other funds	-
Due to other governmental agencies	26
Funds held in escrow	-
Deferred revenue	78,050
Advances from other funds	817,000
Total liabilities	\$918,899

Fund Balances

Description	Amount
Nonspendable:	
Asset held for resale	\$419,457
Public safety principal, nonexpendable	-
Restricted for:	
Donations received	-
CRA	2,785,613
Debt service	-
Economic environment	-
Law enforcement programs	-
Physical environment	-
Transportation	-
Committed to:	
Law enforcement programs	-
Assigned to:	
Subsequent year's expenditures	510,015
Capital projects	677,722
Unassigned	-
Total fund balances	\$4,392,807
Total liabilities and fund balances	\$5,311,706



CRA Financials (All Districts)

Audited Financials as of 2/28/2013

	Budgeted Amounts		Actual	Variance with
	Original	Final	Amounts	Final Budget -
				Positive
				(Negative)
Revenues				
Taxes	\$757,700	\$756,179	\$756,205	\$26
Intergovernmental revenue	-	37,500	37,110	(390)
Miscellaneous	1,211,100	2,156,055	163,899	(1,992,156)
Total revenues	<u>1,968,800</u>	<u>2,949,734</u>	<u>957,214</u>	<u>(1,992,520)</u>
Expenditures				
Current:				
Economic environment	2,736,800	3,474,212	2,485,711	988,501
Total current	<u>2,736,800</u>	<u>3,474,212</u>	<u>2,485,711</u>	<u>988,501</u>
Debt service:				
Principal retirement	496,200	496,200	496,154	46
Interest and fiscal charges	221,900	221,900	221,893	7
Total debt service	<u>718,100</u>	<u>718,100</u>	<u>718,047</u>	<u>53</u>
Capital outlay:				
Economic environment	-	5,700	5,700	-
Total capital outlay	<u>-</u>	<u>5,700</u>	<u>5,700</u>	<u>-</u>
Total expenditures	<u>3,454,900</u>	<u>4,198,012</u>	<u>3,209,458</u>	<u>988,554</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over (under) expenditures	<u>(1,486,100)</u>	<u>(1,248,278)</u>	<u>(2,252,244)</u>	<u>(1,003,966)</u>
Other Financing Sources (Uses)				
Transfers in	1,788,500	1,978,731	1,978,727	(4)
Transfers out	<u>(302,400)</u>	<u>(730,453)</u>	<u>(302,730)</u>	<u>427,723</u>
Total other financing sources & uses	<u>1,486,100</u>	<u>1,248,278</u>	<u>1,675,997</u>	<u>427,719</u>
Net change in fund balances	-	-	(576,247)	(576,247)
Fund balances - beginning	4,969,054	4,969,054	4,969,054	-
Fund balances - ending	<u>\$4,969,054</u>	<u>\$4,969,054</u>	<u>\$4,392,807</u>	<u>\$(576,247)</u>

Redevelopment Trust Fund (All Districts)

Audited Financials as of 2/28/2013

Pursuant to Florida Statute 163.387, the schedule below provides a summary of the sources and amounts of deposits into, and the amount and purpose of withdrawals from, the Redevelopment Trust Fund (Community Redevelopment Agency Fund) for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2012.

	<u>Deposits</u>	<u>Withdrawals</u>
Sources of Deposits		
Deposits Withdrawals		
Sources of deposits:		
Tax increment revenue	\$2,496,676	\$ -
Charges for services	8,423	-
Operating contributions	238,256	-
Interest and Investment Income	12,974	-
Increase in value in asset held for resale	142,502	-
Grant, FDCA Waterfronts FCP Program	37,110	-
Purpose of Withdrawals		
Personnel services	-	632,448
Professional services	-	224,440
Contract services	-	39,075
Utilities	-	61,682
Rentals and leases	-	141,396
ITS service charges and capital recovery	-	41,600
Insurance	-	21,600
Repairs and maintenance	-	365,555
Printing and binding	-	4,628
Advertising	-	6,823
Public relations	-	814
Public relations, special events	-	170,000
Tax increment rebates	-	598,732
Taxes and assessments	-	508
General administrative expense	-	153,800
Office supplies	-	7,493
Travel and transportation	-	9,332
Freight and postage	-	761
Improvements	-	5,700
Dues and subscriptions	-	5,024
Debt service, principal payments	-	496,154
Debt service, interest payments	-	221,893
Subsidy for Police department	-	302,400
Funding for capital projects and equipment	-	330
Totals	<u>\$2,935,941</u>	<u>\$3,512,188</u>

SWFEC Financials

Fund No. 134 (Audited Financials as of 2/28/2013)

Revenues

Description	Amount
Interest and Other Earnings	\$102
Increase in Fair Value of Investments	-
Rental Income	95,605
Miscellaneous Revenue	3,880
Reimbursed Expenses	1,355
Intrafund Transfer from General Fund	232,800
Total Revenues	333,742

Expenditures

Personnel Services	Amount
Salary/Wages	139,967
Seniority Pay	2,446
FICA Tax	10,412
Retirement	40,152
Health/Life Insurance	39,301
Workers' Comp	800
Unemployment Comp	-
Sub-Total for Personnel Services	233,078

Operating

	Amount
Legal Professional Services	8,328
Accounting/Auditing	100
Contractual Services	1,130
Travel/Transportation	35
Communication	-
Freight/Postage	9
Utilities	27,401
Rentals/Leases	1,778
ITS Service Charges	10,100
ITS Capital Recovery	3,600
Insurance	13,500
Repairs/Maintenance	14,325
Printing/Binding	-
Advertising	3,445
Public Relations	7
Taxes/Assessments	3,689
General Administration	17,300
Office Supplies	256
Operating Supplies	901
Small Tools/Equipment	454
Dues/Subscriptions	1,225
Sub-Total for Operating	107,583

Total Expenditures **340,661**

Net Income (Loss) **(6,919)**

Year-End Fund Balance* **\$2,921**

*Year-End Fund Balance as of 9/30/2012; there is no appropriated fund balance for FY2013.

Parking Financials*

Fund No. 403 (Audited Financials as of 2/28/2013)

	Downtown Parking Garages**
Assets	
Description	Amount
Current assets:	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$130,426
Investments	46,650
Restricted cash and cash equivalents	9,254
Restricted investments	1,128
Accounts receivable, net	3,084
Interest receivable	280
Restricted interest receivable	-
Due from other governments	-
Inventories	-
Prepaid items	53,232
Total current assets	<u>244,054</u>
Noncurrent assets:	
Unamortized bond issue costs	-
Capital assets:	
Intangible assets	-
Land and improvements	551,713
Construction in progress	-
Buildings, net	3,667,226
Improvements other than building, net	-
Equipment, net	-
Total noncurrent assets	<u>4,218,939</u>
Total assets	<u>4,462,993</u>
Liabilities	
Current liabilities:	
Accounts and contracts payable	-
Accrued and other liabilities	1,718
Due to other funds	-
Due to other governments	1,914
Unearned revenue	-
Customer deposits	2,569
Compensated absences	-
Accrued interest payable	-
Notes payable	-
Revenue bonds	-
Total current liabilities	<u>6,201</u>
Noncurrent liabilities:	
Compensated absences	-
Other postemployment benefits payable	-
Notes payable	-
Revenue bonds	-
Total noncurrent liabilities	<u>-</u>
Total liabilities	<u>6,201</u>

Net Position	
Net investment in capital assets	4,218,939
Restricted:	
Capital projects	-
Debt service	-
Renewal and replacement	-
Transportation	5,899
Unrestricted	231,954
Total net position	<u>\$4,456,792</u>

Operating Revenues	
Charges for services	\$717,164
Rent	49,896
Miscellaneous	36,769
Total operating revenues	803,829

Operating Expenses	
Personnel services	-
Contractual services	644,495
Materials and supplies	271
General and administrative	25,834
Utilities	3,041
Depreciation	307,236
Insurance	-
Repairs and maintenance	3,721
Travel	-
Rentals	-
Total operating expenses	<u>984,598</u>
Operating income (loss)	<u>(180,769)</u>

Nonoperating Revenues (Expenses)	
Operating grants and contributions	-
Interest income	396
Gain (loss) on disposal of capital assets	-
Interest expense and bond issue costs	-
Total nonoperating revenues (expenses)	<u>396</u>
Income (loss) before contributions and transfers	<u>(180,373)</u>
Capital grants and contributions	-
Transfers in	-
Transfers out	-
Total contributions and transfers in (out)	<u>-</u>
Change in net position	(180,373)
Net position - beginning	4,637,165
Net position - ending	<u>\$4,456,792</u>

* The Parking Fund is actually a City Enterprise Fund, however, the CRA oversees daily parking operations since they are closely associated with special events and business retention/recruitment.

** Although the column states "Downtown Parking Garages", the total amounts also include on-street, parking lots, and monthly hangtags.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Community Redevelopment Area or District?

Under Florida law (Chapter 163, Part III), local governments are able to designate areas as Community Redevelopment Areas when certain conditions exist. Since all the monies used in financing CRA activities are locally generated, CRAs are not overseen by the state, but redevelopment plans must be consistent with local government comprehensive plans. There are currently 178 Community Redevelopment Areas in the State of Florida. The designation is used by Florida cities of all sizes.

What is a Community Redevelopment Agency?

The activities and programs offered within a Community Redevelopment Area are administered by the Community Redevelopment Agency ("CRA"). A five- to seven-member CRA "Board" created by the local government (city or county) directs the agency. The Board can be comprised of local government officials and or other individuals appointed by the local government. Although one local government may establish multiple CRA districts, there generally may be only one CRA Board. Each district must maintain separate trust funds, and expend those funds only in that district. The Fort Myers City Council serves as the CRA Board. The Fort Myers City Council serves at the CRA board.

What is a Community Redevelopment Plan?

The Community Redevelopment Agency ("CRA") is responsible for developing and implementing the Community Redevelopment Plan that addresses the unique needs of the targeted area. The plan includes the overall goals for redevelopment in the area, as well as identifying the types of projects planned for the area.

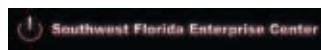
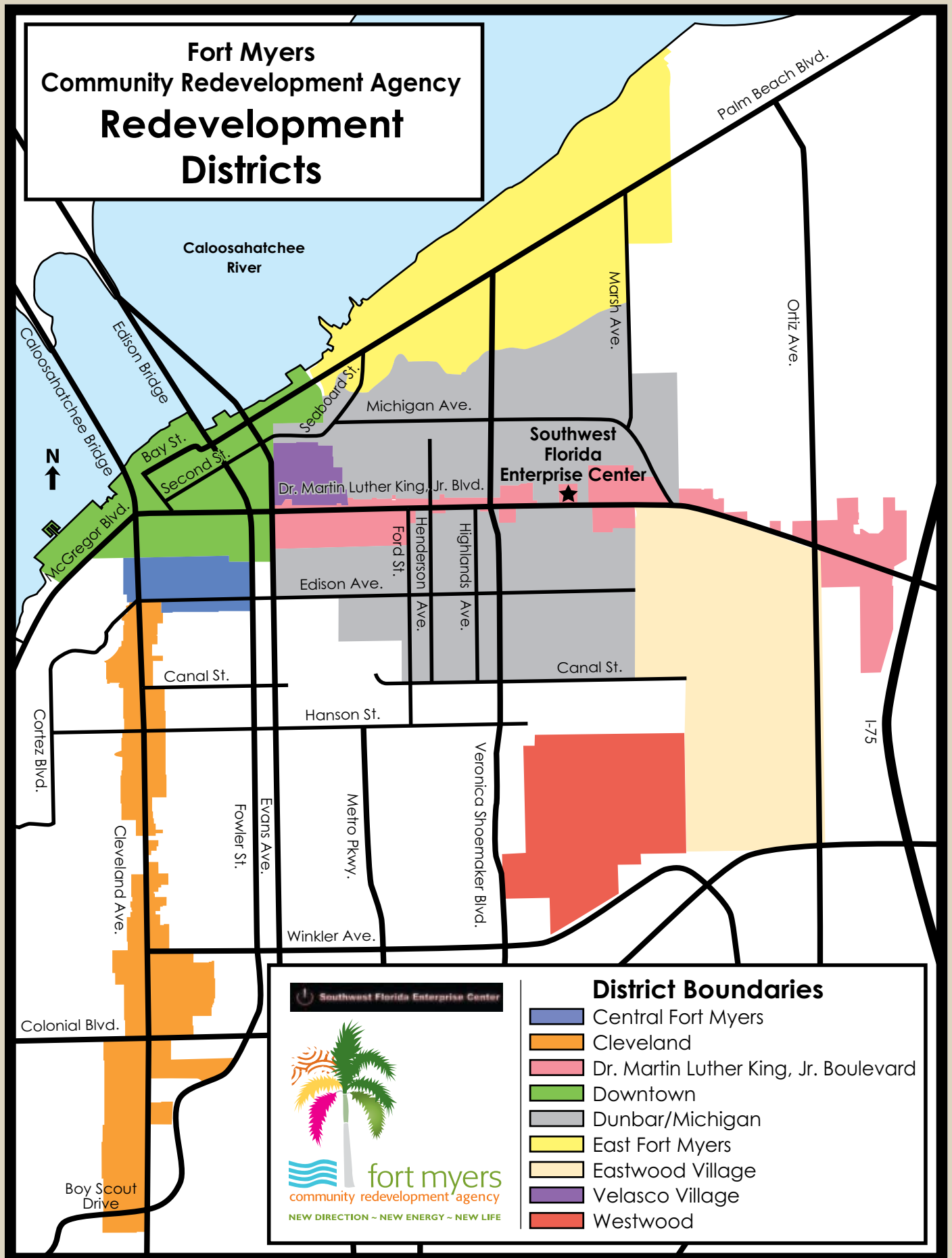
What is Tax Increment Financing?

Tax increment financing is a unique tool available to cities and counties for redevelopment activities. It is used to leverage public funds to promote private sector activity in the targeted area. The dollar value of all real property in the Community Redevelopment Area is determined as of a fixed date, also known as the "frozen value." Taxing authorities, which contribute to the tax increment, continue to receive property tax revenues based on the frozen value. These frozen value revenues are available for general government purposes. However, any tax revenues from increases in real property value, above the frozen value—referred to as "increment," are deposited into the Community Redevelopment Agency Trust Fund and dedicated to the redevelopment area.

Summary

CRAs are a specifically focused financing tool for redevelopment. CRA Boards do not establish policy for the city or county – they develop and administer a plan to implement that policy. The CRA acts officially as a body distinct and separate from the governing body, even when it is the same group of people. The CRA has certain powers that the city or county by itself may not do, such as establish tax increment financing, and leverage local public funds with private dollars to make redevelopment happen. The CRA term is limited to 30 years, 40 years if extended. After that time, all revenues (presumably much increased from the start of the CRA) are retained by each taxing entity that contributed to the CRA trust fund.

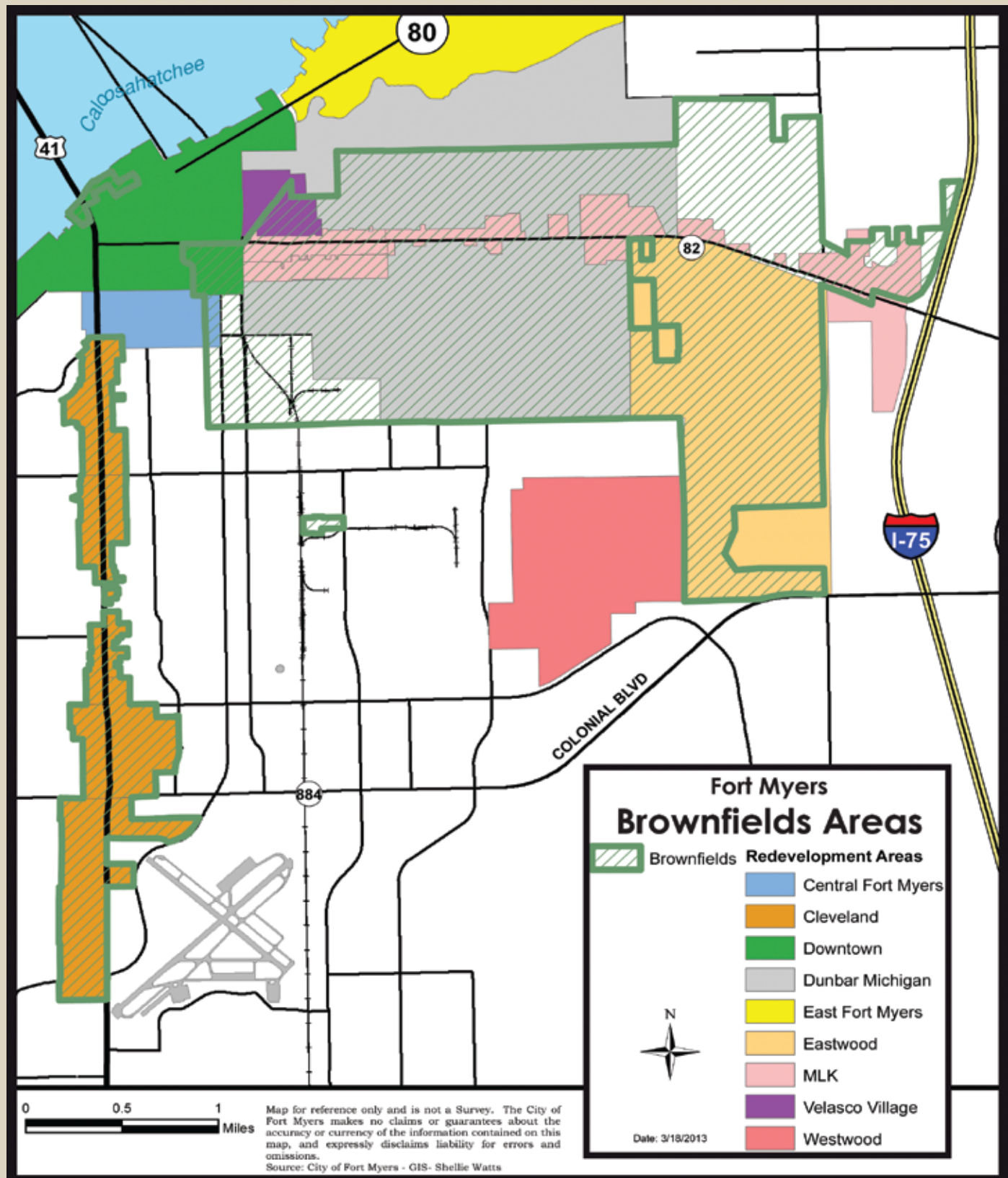
Fort Myers Community Redevelopment Agency Redevelopment Districts



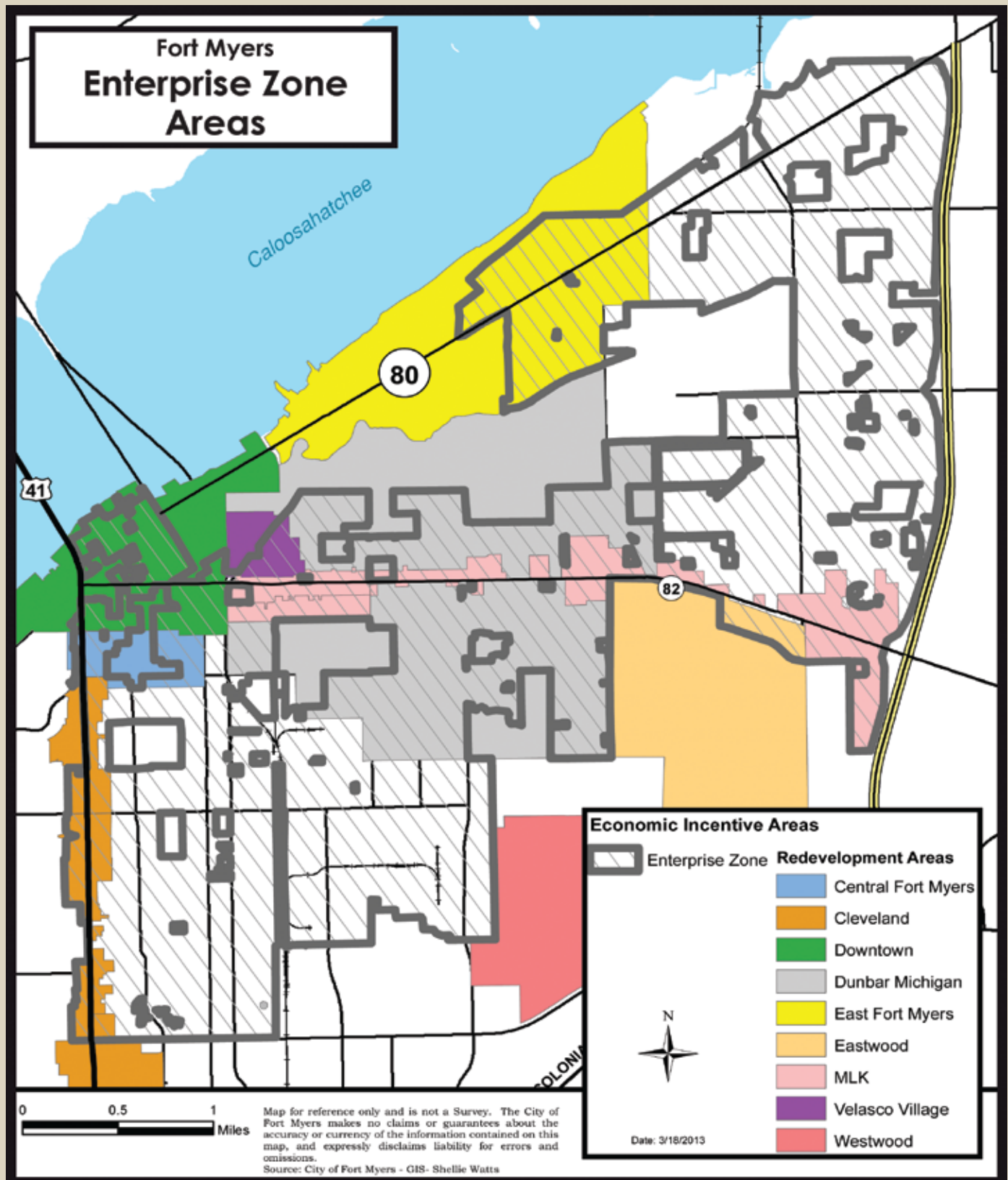
fort myers
community redevelopment agency
NEW DIRECTION ~ NEW ENERGY ~ NEW LIFE

District Boundaries

- Central Fort Myers
- Cleveland
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard
- Downtown
- Dunbar/Michigan
- East Fort Myers
- Eastwood Village
- Velasco Village
- Westwood



The brownfield program is an effective tool in encouraging and facilitating redevelopment initiatives by providing various benefits and incentives to private development, some of which may include Voluntary Cleanup Tax Credits, Building Materials Sales Tax Refund, Job Creation Bonus Refund, Liability Protection, and/or Loan Guarantees. The various brown-field incentives are combinable with other credits available through the Enterprise Zone.



Enterprise Zone Expansion – Through the efforts of the Economic Development Office of Lee County and the Enterprise Zone Board, the City of Fort Myers was able to expand the Enterprise Zone (EZ) to include the Downtown Redevelopment Area. Currently, six of the City redevelopment areas fall within the boundaries of the EZ. During FY2012, the Enterprise Zone attracted 432 new jobs and provided refund incentives totaling \$96,679 from private investment of \$1,661,162. The EZ offers a wide variety of tax refunds, credits, and exemptions for qualifying businesses. For additional information on the Enterprise Zone incentives, contact Sue Noe at the Office of Economic Development (239) 533-6812.