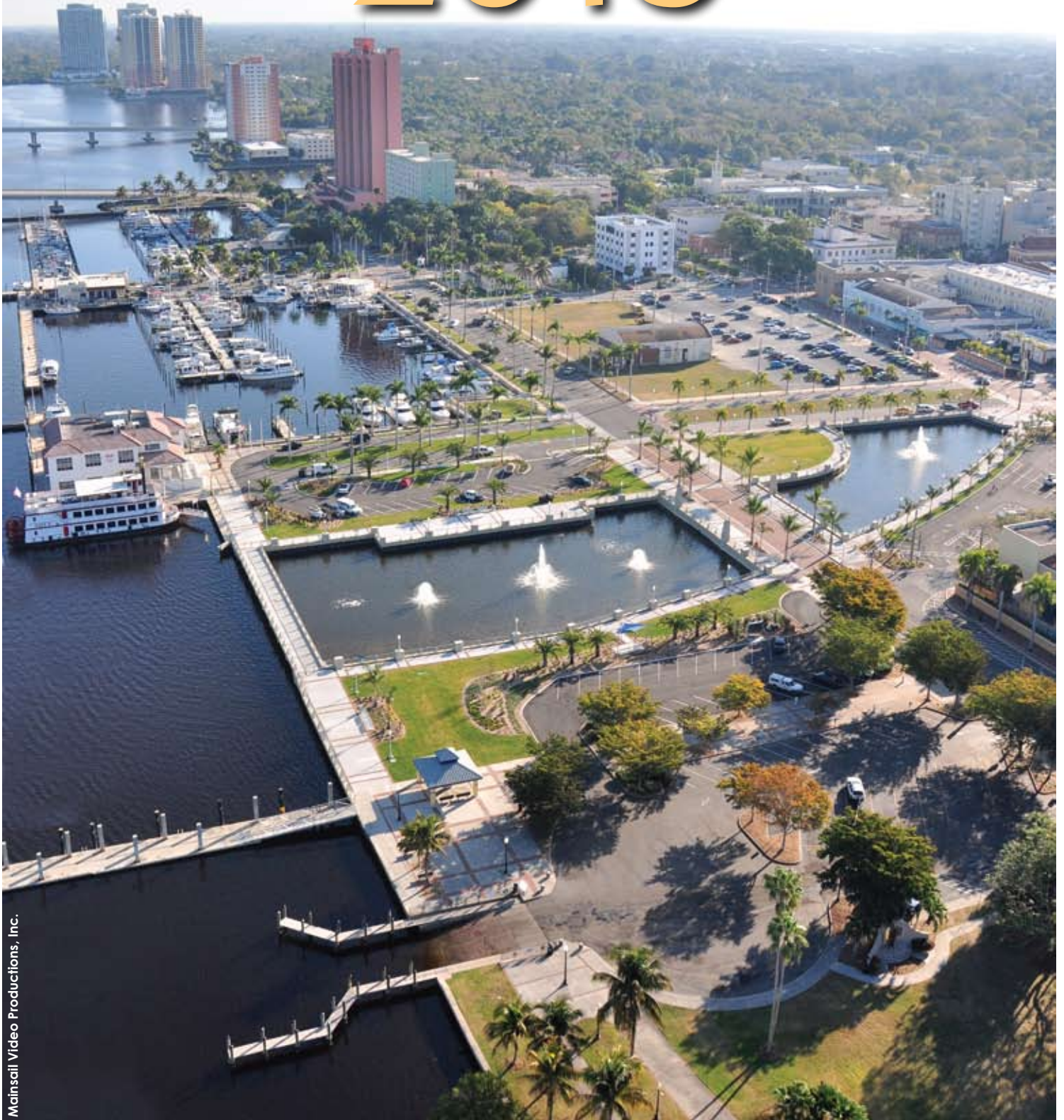


Annual Report 2013





Welcome to

Fort Myers CRA

Community Redevelopment Agency

Mainsail Video Productions, Inc.

The Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Fort Myers is pleased to present its 2013 Annual Report. After five years of declining property values in all of the redevelopment areas, fiscal year 2013 was a turning point, with all areas showing modest to healthy gains. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. Area experienced a 9.5% increase in property values, the Downtown Redevelopment Area was up 3.6%, and the Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Area had a 1% gain. While the remaining four redevelopment areas showed some modest gains, they continue to be valued below their base year and do not generate any tax increment revenue.

The improving economy and the CRA's continued investment in the redevelopment areas has attracted private investment dollars and the new jobs they create. Since 2008, the CRA's investment of \$1,041,467 in development assistance and façade and landscape grants has resulted in over \$22,386,151 of private investment and the creation of over 426 new jobs.

The ongoing support of special event and cultural programming continues to attract hundreds of thousands of visitors to the Downtown Redevelopment Area, also known as the River District. Grants to the River District Alliance, ArtFest, Florida Repertory Theatre, Sidney and Berne Davis Art Center, and Holiday House draw a constant stream of visitors which is transforming the River District into a shopping and dining destination.

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, CRA
Dr. Gerald Laboda, Chairman, CRA 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.cityftmyers.com/cra

Fort Myers Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)



Teresa Watkins Brown
Chairperson



Johnny W. Streets, Jr.
Vice Chairperson



Forrest Banks



Michael A. Flanders



Randall P. Henderson, Jr.
Mayor



Thomas C. Leonardo



Christine Matthews

Fort Myers CRA Advisory Board



Dr. Gerald Laboda
Advisory Board Chairperson



Kirk Beck



Erma Boyd



Raymond Campbell



Bruce Grady



Jami McCormick



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 infrastructure 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.



After

Before Photo: Cella Molinar & Associates; After Photo: E. Pennington/AirFest Fort Myers



Before

Downtown River Basin

2013 Highlights

Completed construction of the River Basin project in December 2012, with a Ribbon Cutting dedication ceremony held on December 7, 2012. This River Basin is the most innovative and unique feature of the Downtown Riverfront Development. This 1.4 acre fully-seawalled Basin provides storm water mitigation for 15 acres of vacant land; adds waterfront property for hotel, retail and restaurant development; and symbolically returns a portion of the waterfront to its historic shoreline, 2 blocks south of the present day shoreline. The project has won 8 awards to date, including the Florida Redevelopment Association's (FRA) 2013 Roy F. Kenzie Award for Capital Projects – Beautification, as well as the FRA's 2013 President's Award, citing the Fort Myers River Basin as the Best of the Best of Florida Redevelopment projects in 2013.

The Southwest Florida Enterprise Center (SWFEC) assisted several new or start-up businesses by providing affordable space from which to run their businesses. In addition to existing small businesses located in the Center, in 2013, offices were leased to ABC Transportation and Radio Vision Cristiana, while warehouse space was leased to West Lawrence School of Nursing and Nation's Association.

The planning, design, and public meeting for the Velasco Village Park began in 2008, and the construction began in 2013. Located at Dr. Ella Piper Way and Palm Avenue, the small, substandard, unbuildable lot with the railroad tracks cutting through provided an opportunity to create this passive neighborhood park. As a passive park, there will be no structures built or play equipment installed, but rather, a walkway and seating areas accented by plantings. All existing trees on the site will remain and be pruned, with several other trees, shrubs, and groundcover added to create an inviting space. Construction is set to be completed in 2014.

2013 Highlights

Began construction at the James C. Boyd Funeral Home in 2013. The redevelopment project, located in the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard district, was awarded a \$50,000 Landscape/Façade grant and \$10,000 Development Assistance grant in 2010. The initial project proposed a remodel and expansion of the existing structure; however, the focus changed and turned into a complete tear down and rebuild in the same location. The funeral home redevelopment is slated for completion in 2014. The incentive is expected to generate approximately \$450,000 in private funds invested, for a total project cost of approximately \$500,000.

Approved a Development Agreement with The Pittman Group for the 323-unit Riverview Senior Living project (a.k.a. Campo Felice), to be located in the old Amtel Hotel building on Edwards Drive in the Downtown district. By the end of FY2013, purchase of the building had not yet been completed.

Sanctioned a Landscape/Façade grant for El Dorado Plaza in the Cleveland Avenue district, for an amount not to exceed \$70,000. The property, located at 4429 Cleveland Avenue, was purchased by the family-owned El Dorado Furniture Stores to makeover the site for one of their locations, as well as adjoining spaces for other businesses. Planned improvements include adding an enhanced roof line and elevated tower to make the plaza more visually attractive, as well as new landscaping in the entryway and parking lot areas. This project will serve as a pilot program for other plazas, showcasing the benefits of turning a bleak, asphalt-oriented parking lot into a beautifully-landscaped frontage that attracts customers to the shopping center. Property upgrades are expected to create 70 to 100 construction jobs, approximately 50 permanent jobs in the El Dorado Furniture Store, and 70 to 85 new jobs in the other tenant spaces.





2013 Highlights

Construction of the Fort Myers Regional Library building, located at 2450 First Street, neared completion by the end of FY2013. The facility is a joint venture of the CRA and City of Fort Myers Community Development Department—which provided research and facilitated land acquisition of the Downtown site—with Lee County government, which funded the design, permitting, construction, and furnishings costs of the new library that is nearly three times the size of the former location it is replacing. The \$20 million library is consistent with Downtown’s redevelopment plan, becoming the eastern anchor on First Street recommended by the district’s “Duany” Master Plan.

Approved a Landscape/Façade grant for Miracle Plaza FM, LLC, in the not-to-exceed amount of \$25,000, for enhanced site improvements including landscaping, increased building aesthetics, and improved pedestrian access, for the property located at 4160-4224 World Plaza Lane in the Cleveland Avenue district. In 2012, Miracle Plaza had received a \$10,000 Development Assistance grant for the planning and design of the landscape and façade improvements. The incentives resulted in a private investment of \$35,000.

Redesigned the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard district’s Dunbar Cultural Landmarks Tour as a booklet showcasing 10 places significant to the local community. The full-color booklets feature a location map, a brief history of this section of Fort Myers, and photos and stories of the individual destinations. 10,000 booklets were printed for distribution to the community in the coming years through several local outlets, as well as on a free guided trolley tour scheduled for FY2014.

Continued support of special events and cultural venues by providing funds to the River District Alliance, ArtFest Fort Myers, Holiday House, Florida Repertory Theatre, and the Sidney and Berne Davis Art Center. The theatre performances, concerts, and 80+ special events bring thousands of patrons downtown to not only attend the events, but to support the restaurants and retail shops located within the River District.

2013 Highlights

The River District Trolley began its first season of service in FY2013, running from November 26, 2012, through April 17, 2013. Over 28,600 passengers rode the two trolley routes, one route spanning the width of the Downtown district and the other route focusing on the downtown core streets. The Trolley service was provided through a partnership between the City, the CRA, and LeeTran. Funds collected through the developer-funded para-transit fee were used as a match for a grant from the Florida Department of Transportation. Including the FY2013 season, the partnership secured \$360,000 in funds available for use within a 3-year period.

Approved a Landscape/Façade grant to Hickson Funeral Home, located at 3308 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., in an amount not to exceed \$10,000. The funds will be used to create a new lobby by enclosing the existing overhang; to install new windows, doors, and signage; and to add large potted trees since the property abuts City right-of-way and there is no room for private landscape improvements (although the City plans to re-landscape the adjoining right-of-way). The grant is expected to result in a private investment of \$67,000, for total project costs of \$77,000.

Restructured the River District Farmers' Market by hiring a new market manager to manage, expand and improve the market. The manager's duties include supervising new and existing vendors, planning and executing market expansion, and working with CRA staff concerning vendor payments and market advertising.

A Landscape/Façade grant was approved in the not-to-exceed amount of \$1,100 for Happiness Healthy Café, dba Real Investment, LLC, located at 1963 Ricardo Avenue in the Cleveland Avenue district. Funds from the grant will be used to purchase new signage and make repairs to the parking lot.



River District Trolley

CRA Assets & Liabilities

Audited Financials as of 2/21/2014

Assets

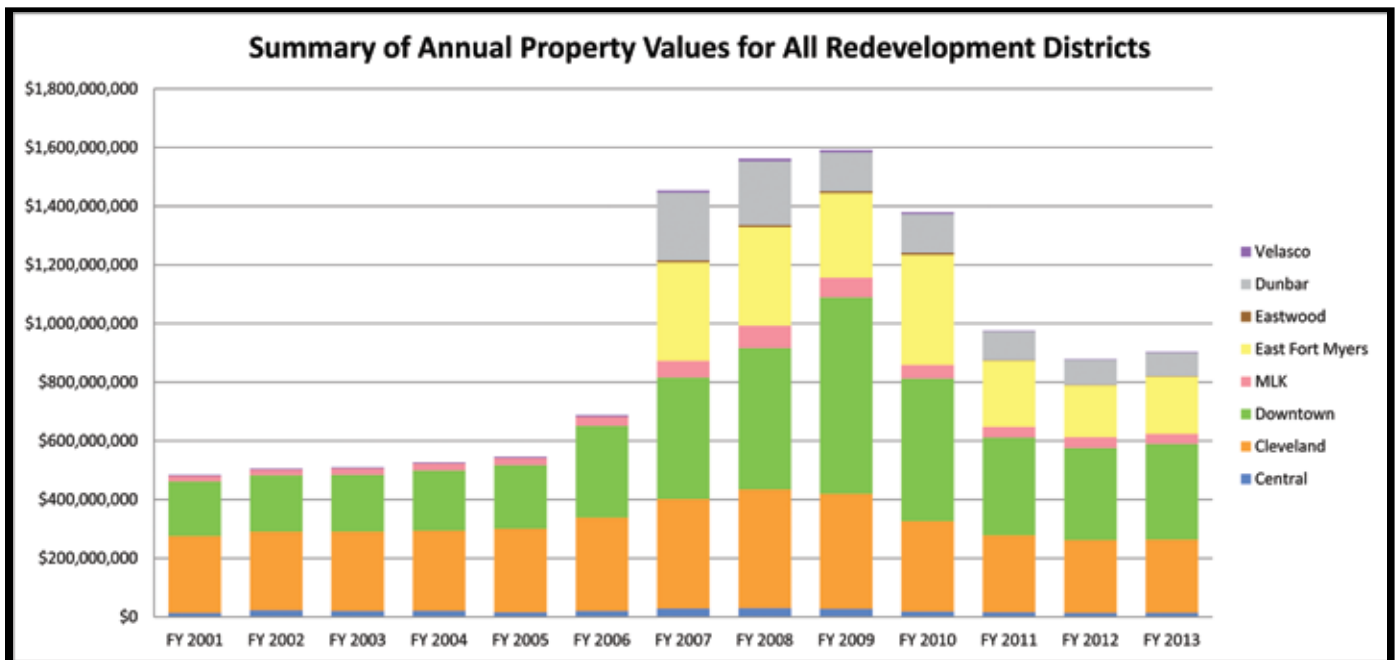
Description	Amount
Cash and cash equivalents	\$3,403,610
Investments	1,336,943
Accounts receivable, net	78,121
Interest receivable	5,961
Due from other governmental agencies	-
Inventories	-
Prepaid items	12,526
Notes receivable	-
Allowance for notes receivable	-
Assets held for resale	419,457
Total assets	\$5,256,618

Liabilities and Fund Balances

Description	Amount
Accounts and contracts payable	\$132,954
Accrued and other liabilities	1,388
Due to other funds	-
Due to other governmental agencies	16
Funds held in escrow	-
Unearned revenue	78,050
Advances from other funds	617,000
Total liabilities	\$829,408

Fund Balances

Description	Amount
Nonspendable:	
Asset held for resale	\$419,457
Public safety principal, nonexpendable	-
Restricted for:	
Donations received	-
CRA	4,007,753
Debt service	-
Economic environment	-
Law enforcement programs	-
Physical environment	-
Transportation	-
Committed to:	
Law enforcement programs	-
Unassigned	-
Total fund balances	\$4,427,210
Total liabilities and fund balances	\$5,256,618



CRA Financials (All Districts)

Audited Financials as of 2/21/2014

	Budgeted Amounts		Actual Amounts	Variance with Final Budget - Positive (Negative)
	Original	Final		
Revenues				
Taxes	\$800,400	\$803,395	\$803,395	\$ -
Miscellaneous	437,700	810,711	14,546	(796,165)
Total revenues	<u>1,238,100</u>	<u>1,614,106</u>	<u>817,941</u>	<u>(796,165)</u>
Expenditures				
Current:				
Economic environment	2,508,900	2,868,663	2,058,389	810,274
Total current	<u>2,508,900</u>	<u>2,868,663</u>	<u>2,058,389</u>	<u>810,274</u>
Debt service:				
Principal retirement	496,100	496,100	496,154	(54)
Interest and fiscal charges	202,300	202,300	202,274	26
Total debt service	<u>698,400</u>	<u>698,400</u>	<u>698,428</u>	<u>(28)</u>
Total expenditures	<u>3,207,300</u>	<u>3,567,063</u>	<u>2,756,817</u>	<u>810,246</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over (under) expenditures	(1,969,200)	(1,952,957)	(1,938,876)	14,081
Other Financing Sources (Uses)				
Transfers in	1,969,200	1,976,353	1,976,352	(1)
Transfers out	-	(23,396)	(3,073)	20,323
Total other financing sources & uses	<u>1,969,200</u>	<u>1,952,957</u>	<u>1,973,279</u>	<u>20,322</u>
Net change in fund balances	-	-	34,403	34,403
Fund balances - beginning	4,392,807	4,392,807	4,392,807	-
Fund balances - ending	<u>\$4,392,807</u>	<u>\$4,392,807</u>	<u>\$4,427,210</u>	<u>\$ 34,403</u>

Redevelopment Trust Fund (All Districts)

Audited Financials as of 2/21/2014

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, 2013.

	<u>Deposits</u>	<u>Withdrawals</u>
Sources of Deposits		
Sources of deposits:		
Tax increment revenue	\$2,734,747	\$ -
Charges for services	7,618	-
Operating contributions	45,000	-
Interest and Investment Income	6,928	-
Purpose of Withdrawals		
Personnel services	-	491,158
Professional services	-	113,374
Contract services	-	54,116
Utilities	-	69,377
Rentals and leases	-	145,506
ITS service charges and capital recovery	-	46,800
Insurance	-	23,400
Repairs and maintenance	-	41,991
Printing and binding	-	7,377
Advertising	-	14,309
Public relations	-	2,943
Public relations, special events	-	170,000
Tax increment rebates	-	674,590
General administrative expense	-	142,200
Office supplies	-	15,490
Travel and transportation	-	2,894
Freight and postage	-	475
Improvements	-	28,807
Equipment	-	8,549
Dues and subscriptions	-	5,033
Debt service, principal payments	-	496,154
Debt service, interest payments	-	202,274
Funding for capital projects and equipment	-	3,073
Totals	<u><u>\$2,794,293</u></u>	<u><u>\$2,759,890</u></u>

SWFEC Financials

Fund No. 134 (Audited Financials as of 2/21/2014)

Revenues

Description	Amount
Interest and Other Earnings	\$ 34
Increase in Fair Value of Investments	(9)
Rental Income	114,327
Miscellaneous Revenue	7,201
Reimbursed Expenses	3,370
Intrafund Transfer from General Fund	225,800
Total Revenues	<u>350,723</u>

Expenditures

	Amount
Personnel Services	
Salary/Wages	140,485
Seniority Pay	2,583
FICA Tax	10,477
Retirement	37,510
Health/Life Insurance	38,723
Workers' Comp	900
Unemployment Comp	-
Sub-Total for Personnel Services	<u>230,678</u>

Operating

	Amount
Professional Services	80
Accounting/Auditing	100
Contractual Services	960
Travel/Transportation	-
Communication	45
Freight/Postage	3
Utilities	34,402
Rentals/Leases	1,359
ITS Service Charges	12,000
ITS Capital Recovery	3,900
Insurance	14,600
Repairs/Maintenance	3,837
Printing/Binding	-
Advertising	4,680
Public Relations	-
Taxes/Assessments	2,599
General Administration	17,400
Office Supplies	988
Operating Supplies	1,139
Small Tools/Equipment	-
Assets \$750-\$5,000	1,196
Dues/Subscriptions	586
Sub-Total for Operating	<u>99,874</u>

Total Expenditures

330,552

Net Income (Loss)

\$ 20,171

Parking Financials*

Fund No. 403 (Audited Financials as of 2/21/2014)

	Downtown Parking Garages*
Assets	Amount
Current assets:	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$227,690
Investments	88,214
Restricted cash and cash equivalents	19,321
Restricted investments	1,569
Accounts receivable, net	350
Interest receivable	233
Restricted interest receivable	-
Due from other governments	6,618
Inventories	-
Prepaid items	47,083
Total current assets	<u>391,078</u>
Noncurrent assets:	
Capital assets:	
Intangible assets	-
Land and improvements	551,713
Construction in progress	-
Buildings, net	3,359,990
Improvements other than building, net	-
Equipment, net	-
Total noncurrent assets	<u>3,911,703</u>
 Total assets	 <u>4,302,781</u>
Deferred Outflows of Resources	
Deferred amounts on refunding	-
Total deferred outflows of resources	<u>-</u>
Liabilities	
Current liabilities:	
Accounts and contracts payable	42,143
Accrued and other liabilities	-
Due to other governments	3,015
Customer deposits	2,569
Compensated absences	-
Accrued interest payable	-
Notes payable	-
Revenue bonds	-
Total current liabilities	<u>47,727</u>
Noncurrent liabilities:	
Compensated absences	-
Other postemployment benefits payable	-
Notes payable	-
Revenue bonds	-
Total noncurrent liabilities	<u>-</u>
 Total liabilities	 <u>47,727</u>

Net Position	
Net investment in capital assets	3,911,703
Restricted:	
Capital projects	-
Debt service	-
Renewal and replacement	-
Transportation	15,305
Unrestricted	328,046
Total net position	<u>\$4,255,054</u>

Operating Revenues	
Charges for services	\$800,819
Rent	53,328
Miscellaneous	11,372
Total operating revenues	<u>865,519</u>

Operating Expenses	
Personnel services	-
Contractual services	722,124
Materials and supplies	215
General and administrative	26,873
Utilities	3,118
Depreciation	307,236
Insurance	-
Repairs and maintenance	7,691
Travel	-
Rentals	-
Total operating expenses	<u>1,067,257</u>

Operating income (loss) (201,738)

Nonoperating Revenues (Expenses)	
Operating grants and contributions	-
Interest income	-
Gain (loss) on disposal of capital assets	-
Interest expense and bond issue costs	-
Total nonoperating revenues (expenses)	<u>-</u>
Income (loss) before contributions and transfers	<u>(201,738)</u>

Capital grants and contributions	-
Transfers in	-
Transfers out	-
Total contributions and transfers in (out)	<u>-</u>

Change in net position	(201,738)
Net position - beginning	4,456,792
Net position - ending	<u>\$4,255,054</u>

* While the Parking Fund is actually a City Enterprise Fund which falls under the jurisdiction of the City Council, the CRA oversees parking operations on a daily basis since they are closely associated with business retention and recruitment efforts. The Parking Financials are included for informational purposes only.

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.

What is a Community Redevelopment Plan?

The Community Redevelopment Agency 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.

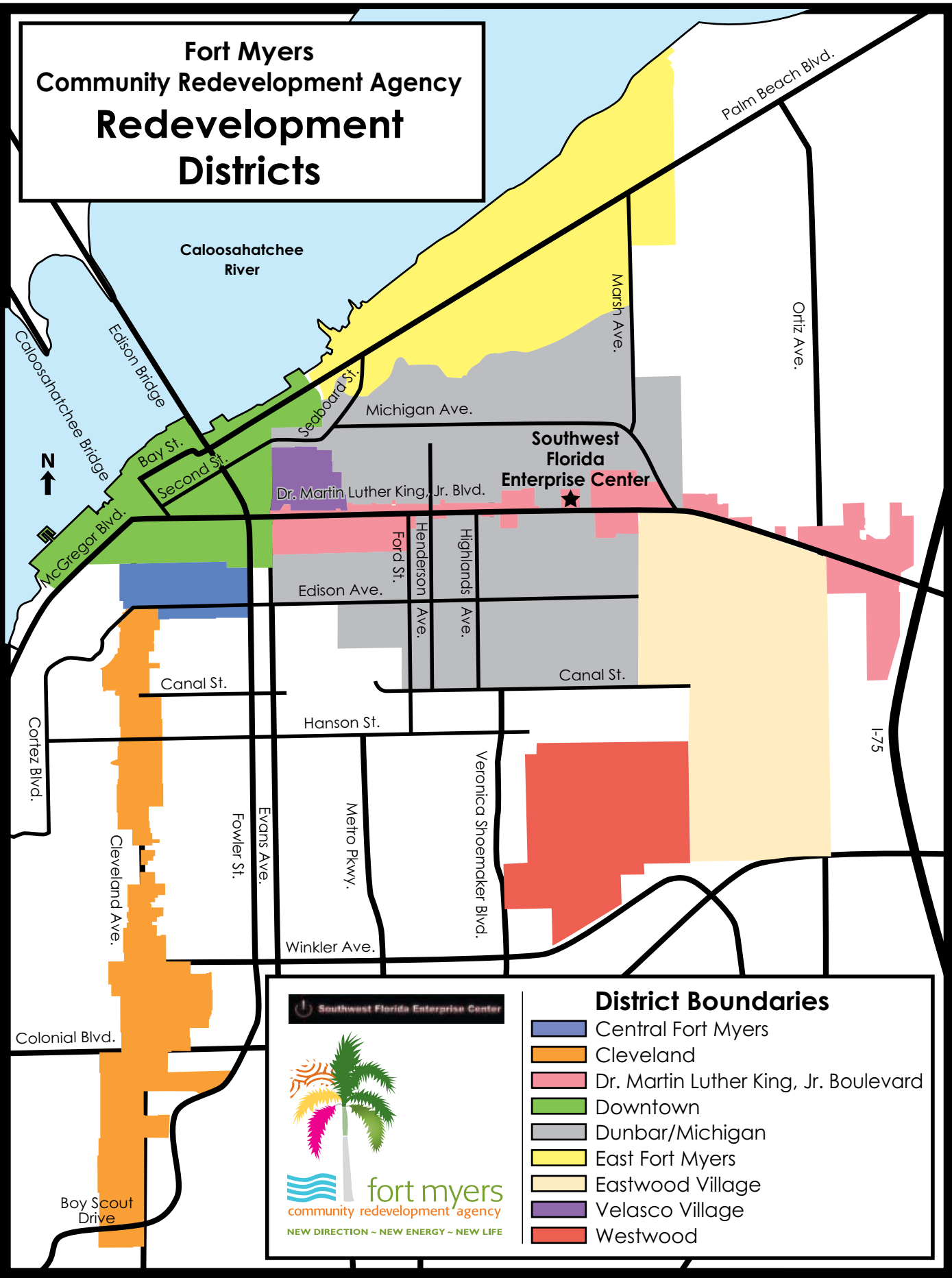
What is Tax Increment Financing?



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 lifespan of a CRA redevelopment district 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

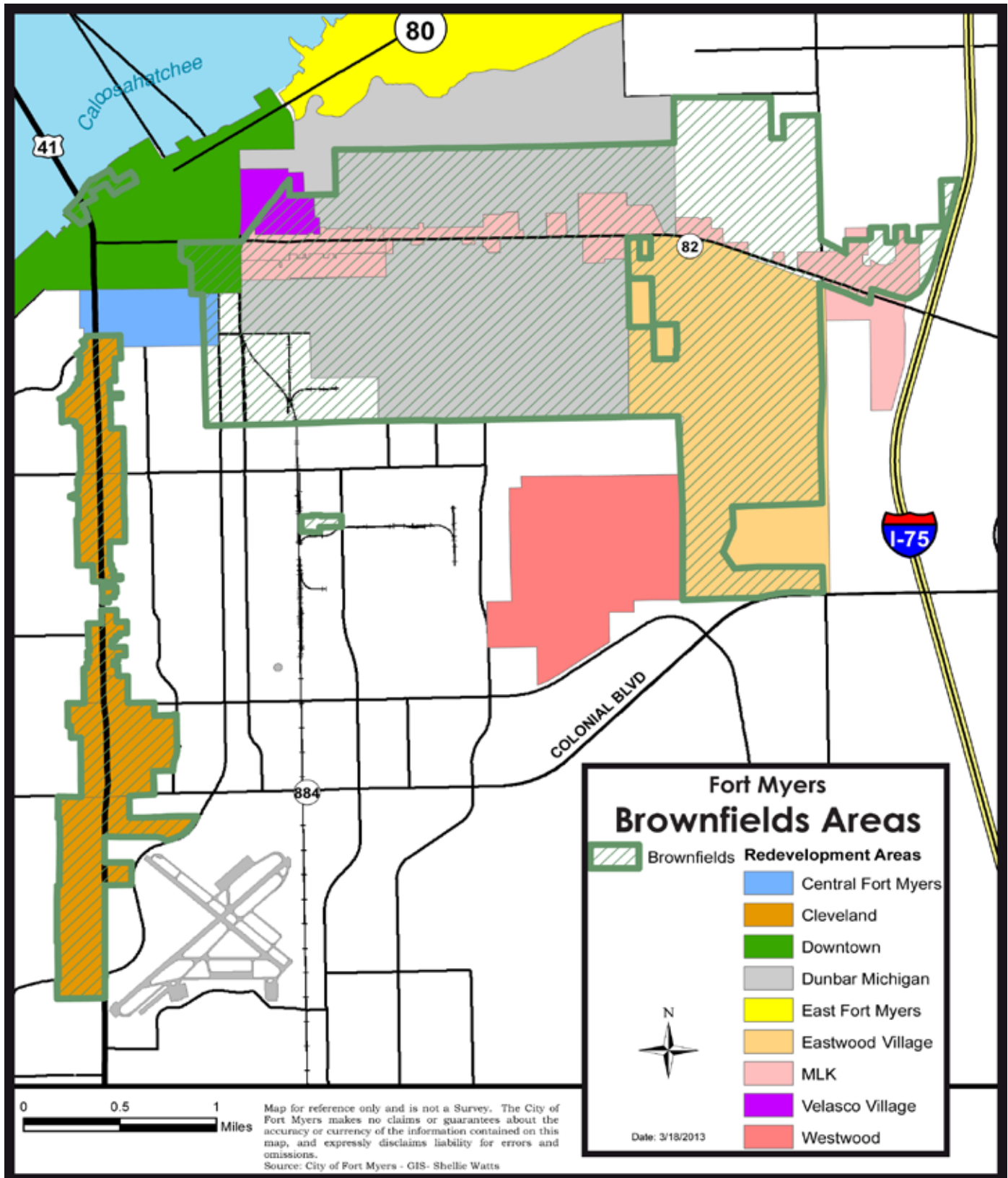


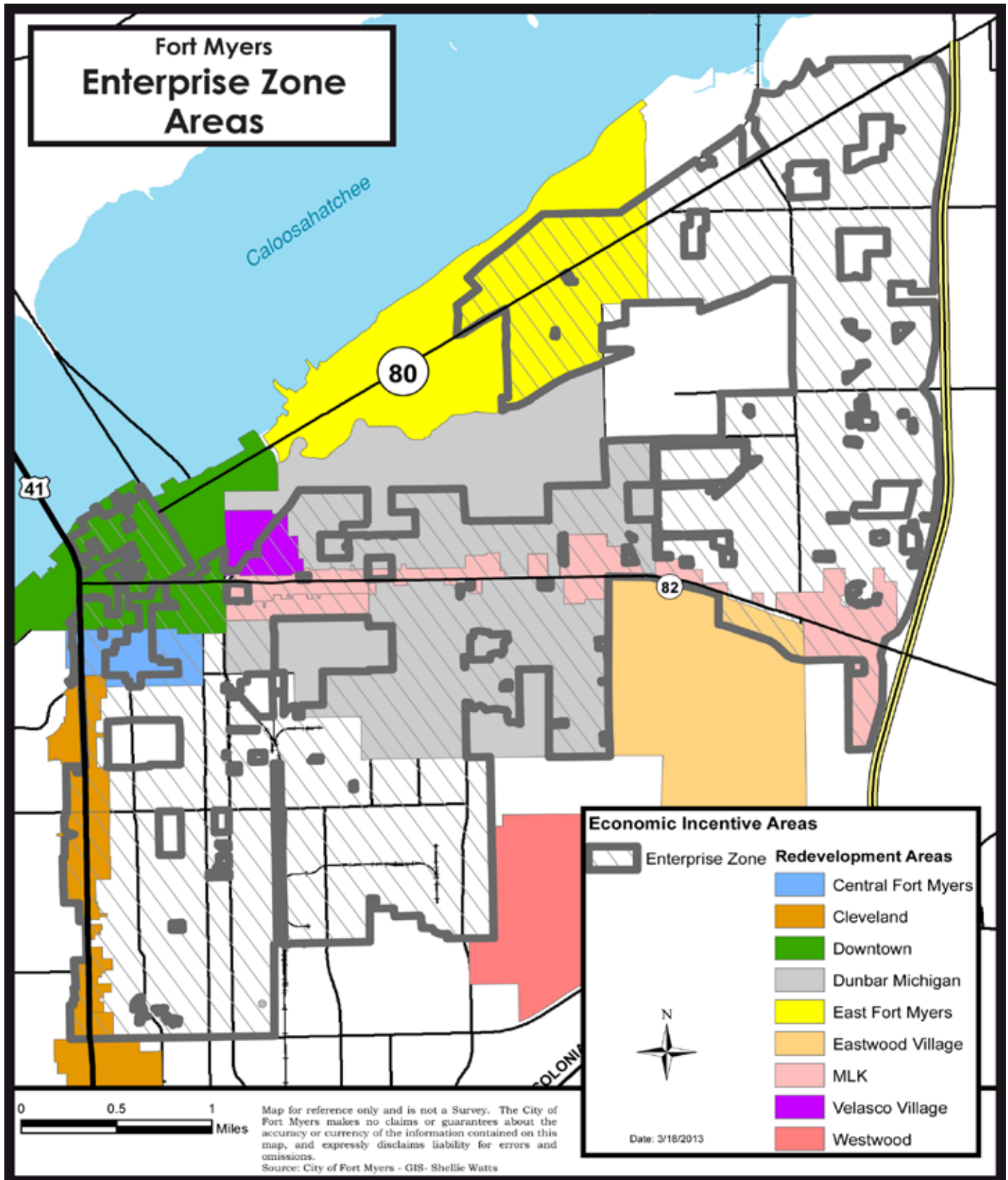
fort myers
community redevelopment agency
NEW DIRECTION ~ NEW ENERGY ~ NEW LIFE

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 Brownfield 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. The EZ offers a wide variety of tax refunds, credits, and exemptions for qualifying businesses. For additional information on the Enterprise Zone incentives, contact the Economic Development Office of Lee County at (239) 338-3161.