

April, 1994

LEHIGH ACRES COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Lee County
Community Redevelopment Agency

*MYRA KESSLER'S
BOOK*

LEE COUNTY

February 15, 1994

Board of County Commissioners

John E. Manning	District 1
Douglas St. Cerny	District 2
Ray Judah, Chairman	District 3
Franklin B. Mann	District 4
John E. Albion, Vice Chairman	District 5

Donald D. Stilwell, County Administrator

LEHIGH ACRES

Local Redevelopment Planning Committee

Willard Baker	Myra Kessler
Lee Downs	Orville Kurtz
Stanville Eastmond	Charlie Matheny
Jim Fleming	Kathy Morgan
Barbara Frazier	Rae Nicely
Eunice Hartman	Royden Parke
Beverly Hickerson	Georgia Gorman Partridge
Virginia Hinspeter	Debra Shuman

Charles Faulkner, Chairman

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
1. INTRODUCTION	
Section 1.1 Overview of the Redevelopment Plan	1
Section 1.2 Goals and Objectives	1
Section 1.3 Redevelopment Plan Statute Requirements	2
Section 1.4 Consistency with the Lee Plan	4
Section 1.5 The Lehigh Acres Redevelopment Process	8
2. EXISTING CONDITIONS	
Section 2.1 The Community Redevelopment Area	10
Section 2.2 Population	10
Section 2.3 Land Use	11
Section 2.4 Zoning	29
Section 2.5 Environmental Concerns	31
Section 2.6 Infrastructure	32
3. THE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN	
Section 3.1 The Plan Process	36
Section 3.2 The Plan Concept	36
Section 3.3 Issue Analysis/Needs Assessment	37
Section 3.4 Community Goals and Priority Projects	40
Section 3.5 The Redevelopment Focus	46
Section 3.6 Funding Plan	50
Section 3.7 Funding Alternatives	53
Section 3.8 Projected TIF Revenues	55
Section 3.9 Project Completion Schedule	55
Section 3.10 Neighborhood Impact Statement for Low to Moderate Income Housing	58

LIST OF EXHIBITS

		<u>Page</u>
Exhibit 1	Future Land Use Map	7
Exhibit 2	CRA Boundary	13
Exhibit 3	Open Space and Recreation	19
Exhibit 4	Interim Traffic Circulation Plan Map	27
Exhibit 5	Significant Vegetation	33
Exhibit 6	Water Distribution System	34
Exhibit 7	Wastewater Collection System	35
Exhibit 8	Areawide Plan	48
Exhibit 9	Core Area Plan	48a
Exhibit 10	Orientation/Sense of Place	49

LIST OF TABLES

		<u>Page</u>
Table 1	Population	12
Table 2	Existing Land Use	15
Table 3	Commercial Uses: Strip Shopping Centers	16
Table 4	Vacancy Rates in Select Strip Shopping Centers	16
Table 5	School Enrollment	22
Table 6	Roadway Maintenance Responsibilities & Levels of Service	26
Table 7	Existing Zoning	30
Table 8	Funding Plan	51
Table 9	TIF Projection	56

APPENDIX

Appendix 1	Lehigh Acres Blight Study	59
Appendix 2	Legal Description	67

1. INTRODUCTION

Section 1.1 OVERVIEW OF THE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Lehigh Acres redevelopment area is one of eleven areas designated by the Lee County Board of County Commissioners as a redevelopment area under the authority of Florida Statutes, Chapter 163, Part III, Community Development Act. (The scope and requirements of this legislation are discussed more fully in Section 1.3.

Each of the eleven redevelopment areas was identified by the presence of one or more conditions of blight as defined in the Statutes. These findings as they pertain to Lehigh Acres, entitled the "Blight Study", are contained in the appendix of this document.

The purpose of the Lehigh Acres redevelopment plan is to formulate strategies for the economic, social, and physical redevelopment of the community, based upon goals and objectives identified by the Lehigh Acres Local Redevelopment Planning Committee (LRPC).

The Lehigh Acres redevelopment plan is divided into three major sections.

Section 1 presents the State of Florida Statute requirements for a Redevelopment Plan, along with the consistency with the Lee County Comprehensive Plan and

the overall goals and objectives established by the LRPC.

Section 2 illustrates existing conditions in the community:

Section 3 depicts the Lehigh Acres Community Plan, community issues, funding alternatives, projected Tax Increment Financing (TIF) revenues, compliance with statutory requirements, project completion schedule, as well as other related elements.

The Lee County Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), the Lehigh Acres Local Redevelopment Planning Committee (LRPC), and the Lehigh Acres community are the agents responsible for the composition and implementation of this Redevelopment Plan.

Section 1.2 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following list of goals and objectives for Lehigh Acres was developed by the Lehigh Acres Local Redevelopment Planning Committee during a series of public workshops.

To provide a community bike path and sidewalk system that would protect the safety and welfare of pedestrians.

2. Increase police protection to provide a safer and more marketable community.
3. Develop bus shelters to protect the welfare of people using public transportation and to increase ridership on Lee Tran.
4. Make Gunnery Road enhancements to provide for the safety and welfare of young adults and community members who will use the new public library and high school.
5. Provide right of way beautification to increase the opportunity to develop a comprehensive landscape identity that would encourage a sense of neighborhood, community pride, and economic development.
6. Address the lack of street lighting to prevent accidents, increase resident safety, allow for better direction, and to create a sense of security.
7. Increase commercial zoning to provide for commercial opportunities and long term economic stability by the development of appropriate zoning and land use relationships.
8. Install community signs to develop a cohesive community image by producing a recognizable graphic and architectural identity.

Section 1.3
REDEVELOPMENT PLAN
STATUTE REQUIREMENTS

According to Florida Statute 163.362, this redevelopment plan must and does contain:

1. A legal description of the community redevelopment area and a reason for establishing such boundaries.
2. Show by diagram and in general terms:
 - a) The approximate amount of open space to be provided and the street layout.
 - b) Limitations on the type, size, height, number, and proposed use of buildings.
 - c) The approximate number of dwelling units.
 - d) Such property as intended for use as public parks, recreation areas, streets, public utilities, and public improvements of any nature.

If the neighborhood contains low

or moderate income housing, contain a neighborhood impact element which describes in detail the impact or redevelopment upon the residents of the redevelopment area and the surrounding areas in terms of relocation, traffic circulation, environmental quality, availability of community facilities and services, effect on school population, and other methods affecting the physical and social quality of the neighborhood.

4. Identify specifically any publicly funded capital projects to be undertaken within the community redevelopment area.
5. Contain adequate safeguards that the work of redevelopment will be carried out pursuant to the plan.
6. Provide for retention of controls and the establishment of any restrictions or covenants running with land sold.
7. Provide assurances that there will be replacement housing for the relocation of persons temporarily or

permanently displaced from housing facilities.

8. Provide an element of residential use in the redevelopment area if such exists in the area prior to the adoption of the plan or if the plan is intended to remedy a shortage of housing affordable to residents of low to moderate income.
9. Contain a detailed statement of the projected cost of redevelopment, including the amount to be expended on publicly funded capital projects in the community redevelopment area and any indebtedness of the community redevelopment agency, the county, or the municipality proposed to be incurred for such redevelopment if such indebtedness is to be repaid with increment revenues.
10. Provide a time certain for all redevelopment financed by increment revenues. Such time certain shall occur no later than 30 years after the fiscal year in which the plan is adopted.

Section 1.4
CONSISTENCY WITH THE LEE
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Lee Plan is Lee County's official comprehensive plan. All development in the county must be consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Lee Plan. The following excerpts from the Lee Plan are provided to demonstrate that the content of the Lehigh Acres Redevelopment Plan is consistent with and furthers the goals, objectives, and policies of the Lee Plan.

The primary objectives and policies which relate to the Lehigh Acres Redevelopment Plan are within the Redevelopment section of the Lee Plan and in the Future Land Use Element.

Pertinent objectives and policies contained within the Lee Plan are as follows:

GOAL 2: GROWTH MANAGEMENT
To provide for an economically feasible plan which coordinates the location and timing of new development with the provision of infrastructure by government agencies, private utilities, and other sources.

OBJECTIVE 2.1: DEVELOPMENT LOCATION
Contiguous and compact growth patterns

shall be promoted through the rezoning process to contain sprawl, minimize energy costs, conserve land, water, and natural resources, minimize the cost of services, and reverse typical development patterns where large tracts of land are bypassed in favor of development more distant from services and existing communities.

OBJECTIVE 2.2: DEVELOPMENT TIMING

Direct new growth through the rezoning process to those portions of the Future Urban Areas where adequate public facilities exist or are assured and where compact and contiguous development patterns can be created.

OBJECTIVE 2.3: PUBLIC PROVISION OF INFRASTRUCTURE

The Capital Improvements Program shall give the highest priority to the planning, programming, and construction of urban services and facilities in the existing developed areas where facilities are inadequate. Next priority shall be given to

areas, followed by further expansion into other portions of the Future Urban Areas. Sufficient land shall be identified and protected for utility facilities that will be necessary to support the proposed level of development.

OBJECTIVE 2.4: FUTURE LAND USE MAP AMENDMENTS

Regularly examine Future Land Use Map in light of new information and changed conditions, and make necessary modifications.

OBJECTIVE 2.7: REDEVELOPMENT

Future redevelopment activities shall be directed in appropriate areas, consistent with sound planning principals, the goals, objectives, and policies contained within this Plan, and the desired community character.

POLICY 2.7.1:

Community redevelopment activities shall be conducted by the Lee County Community Redevelopment Agency within approved redevelopment areas according to adopted redevelopment plans.

POLICY 2.7.2:

Redevelopment activities shall be comprehensive in approach and include the following components:

- * Study of incompatible land uses
- * Correction of outdated zoning classifications
- * Elimination of substandard or unsafe buildings
- * Traffic circulation and parking
- * Economic revitalization
- * Protection of adjacent residential neighborhoods and historic and natural resources
- * Signs
- * Landscaping
- * Urban Design/Master Planning
- * Affordable Housing

The Lehigh Acres Redevelopment Plan makes considerations for addressing each of these components under a comprehensive master plan approach.

POLICY 32.1.9: Lehigh Acres (as defined by outer boundaries of its Privately Funded Infrastructure overlay on the Future Land Use Map) is hereby declared a critical area for future potable water supply due to fluctuating water levels in the Sandstone aquifer. In response to this designation,

the county shall amend current regulations to provide that new wells in Lehigh Acres shall be constructed to accommodate submersible pumps.

Future Land Use Classifications

The Lee Plan designates three distinct future land use categories for Lehigh Acres. They are: Central Urban, Urban Community, and Industrial.

The Central Urban area can best be characterized as one of the urban cores of Lee County. This area is already the most heavily settled and has the greatest range and highest levels of urban service, such as water, sewer, schools, roads, etc.

It is also the area in which public services can most readily be expanded to serve the outward expansion of development at urban levels of density and intensity that can be expected and which should be fostered. Residential, commercial, public and quasi-public areas predominate in the Lehigh central urban area.

This future land use category has a standard density range from five dwelling units per acre to ten dwelling units per acre and a maximum allowed density of 15 dwelling units per acre.

Lehigh Acres' Central Urban area is shown on Exhibit 9. It consists of a triangular area (approximately 3 square

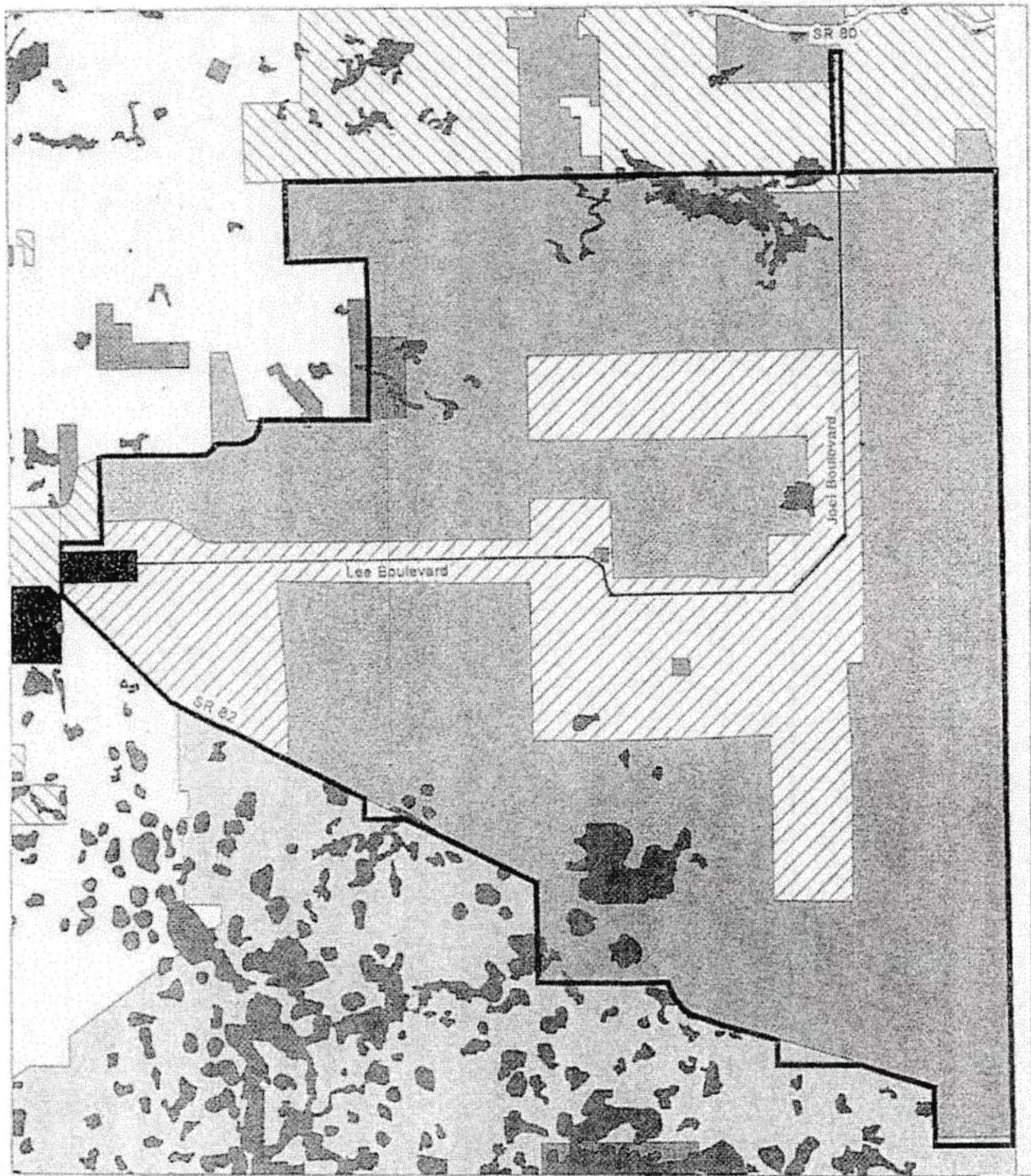
miles) in the center portion of Lehigh Acres to the north of State Road 82; corridors along major portions of Lee Boulevard and State Road 80; 3 sections running north and south, which are bisected by Joel Boulevard; and a 12 square mile central core area in the heart of Lehigh, in the Homestead Road/Beth Stacey/Leeland Heights/Joel Boulevard area.

The Industrial area is the smallest area of the three land use classifications applied to property in Lehigh Acres. It is a relatively small area at the westernmost boundary of the community, along Lee Boulevard. There are several warehouses and light manufacturing uses presently located within the industrial area.

According to the Lee Plan, industrial development areas play an important role in strengthening the county's economic base and will become increasingly important.








This Redevelopment Plan is consistent with numerous other goals and objectives in the Lee Plan, including the following: Goals 4, 6, 7, 12, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 34, 37, 39, 40, 42, 44, 47, 51, 58, 60, 70, 71 (conservation objectives), 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 87, 100, 108, and 109.

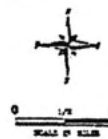
LEHIGH ACRES COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA FUTURE LAND USE MAP



02/01/94

FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORY Source: Lee Plan

- | | |
|--|--|
|  URBAN COMMUNITY |  RURAL |
|  CENTRAL URBAN |  DENSITY REDUCTION/GROUNDWATER RESOURCE |
|  PUBLIC FACILITIES |  RESOURCE PROTECTION AREA |
|  INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT | |



These are the areas to which Lee County will look for expanded job opportunities, investments and production opportunities, and a balanced and sufficient tax base. These areas also need higher levels of service (transportation, roads, fire protection, etc.) than other areas.

At a future point, it may be prudent to examine the potential for expansion of Lehigh Acres' small industrial area and/or consider the future designation of other areas to serve the community.

The Urban Community areas are freestanding areas that are somewhat removed from the Central Urban area. Although Urban Communities have a distinctly urban character, the Lee Plan specifies that they should be developed at slightly lower densities.

As their vacant portions are developed and become urbanized, the community will need to expand its base of urban services and strengthen them accordingly. The predominant land uses in the Urban Community areas are the same as those in the Central Urban areas. Standard density ranges from one dwelling unit per acre to six dwelling units per acre, with a maximum of 10 dwelling units per acre.

The vast majority of Lehigh falls under the urban community category, with limited urban services and large tracts of vacant land with isolated low density development.

Section 1.5

THE LEHIGH ACRES REDEVELOPMENT PROCESS

On June 7th 1993, the Lee County Board of County Commissioners directed the CRA staff to begin the redevelopment process for Lehigh Acres. The first step was the determination of a planning boundary and the completion of a blight study.

A total of three public workshops were held in the community to direct the development of the Blight Study.

On December 15, 1993 the Lee County Board of County Commissioners approved, by resolution, the Lehigh Acres Blight Study, and directed CRA staff to prepare a Redevelopment Plan for the area.

The planning process for the Lehigh Acres Redevelopment Plan was publicly driven with the CRA staff dependent on community participation. Two public workshops were conducted during this phase.

In addition, the staff held meetings with the Lehigh Acres Local Redevelopment Planning Committee (LRPC). The result of this cooperative community based effort is this document.

The next phase of this process is the adoption of the Lehigh Acres Redevelopment Plan by the Lee County Board of County Commissioners. After plan adoption, the CRA staff and members of the Lehigh Acres

community will begin to implement the projects and programs set forth in the redevelopment plan, including the creation of detailed plans for neighborhoods within Lehigh Acres.

2. EXISTING CONDITIONS

Section 2.1

THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA

The Lehigh Acres redevelopment area (see Exhibit 1) is 96.4 square miles located in Southeast Lee County. This area is generally bounded by Buckingham Road to the West, SR 82 to the South, the Hendry County line to the East, and SR 80 to the North. Within the area is a large central core, which includes Homestead Road, and parts of SR 884. Toward the outer quadrants of the Lehigh Acres redevelopment area are potential neighborhood centers, whose exact boundaries and locations will be determined at a future date during the master planning process.

A majority of the properties in the redevelopment area are vacant residential, with limited existing commercial acreage.

A legal description of the Lehigh Acres redevelopment area is contained in Appendix 2.

Section 2.2 POPULATION

According to the U.S. Census of Population and Housing, the 1990 population of Lehigh Acres was 22,100¹, representing 6.6% of the total Lee County population.

Nearly one-third of Lehigh Acres' residents are age 65 and over, compared to only 25% of county residents as a whole. Interestingly, the median age in Lehigh Acres was 37.8, compared to a countywide median of 42.0. Average household sizes are also larger than in the rest of Lee County, with 2.7 persons per household in Lehigh Acres, compared to 2.35 persons per household throughout Lee County.

In general, the Census data shows that, while Lehigh Acres has a significant retiree population, it also caters to young people with children. These residents are younger on the average than other residents of Lee County, and they have children. The median age of Lehigh Acres residents has decreased substantially in the last 20 years, as younger families continue to move into the community. This trend is likely due to changed marketing strategies which describe Lehigh Acres as "your hometown", with affordable housing for first-time home buyers.

A slight discrepancy in total population figures between Blight Study totals and the data presented herein is due to minor errors in Census data breakdowns by race, ethnicity, and other demographic characteristics.

Lehigh Acres' population has doubled every ten years since 1970, and this growth rate is also expected to continue, particularly in the next few years while low interest rates make home purchases attractive and affordable.

One interesting recent trend (about which there is very little exact data) is a seemingly large influx of buyers from Germany. Further study should determine whether German buyers are purchasing lots, homes, or both, and whether they are actually residing in them or simply purchasing them for investment and/or vacation homes.

Table 1 shows the population characteristics of the Lehigh Acres community.

Section 2.3 LAND USE

The Lehigh Acres redevelopment area is a 96.47 square mile area generally bounded by State Road 80 to the north, the Hendry County line to the east, State Road 82 to the south, and Buckingham Road to the west. Approximately 63% of the land area in Lehigh Acres is vacant.

Since Lehigh Acres was platted in a grid system a number of years ago, roads and drainage canals throughout the community are largely in place. The total right of way and canal system comprises 16,755 acres (26.2 square miles), for a total of 27.14% of Lehigh

Acres' land area.

When the percentage of vacant land and the total land area devoted to rights of way are added together, it becomes clear that less than 10% of the land in Lehigh Acres is presently occupied by housing and commercial structures, whereas nearly all of the roads are built.

Residential Uses

The most predominant existing land use in developed portions of Lehigh Acres are single family residences, which are mainly concentrated around the core of the community. Isolated parcels of developed single family residences are scattered throughout Lehigh Acres in a random pattern of sprawling development. Several large tracts in outlying areas (Mirror Lakes, Bethany Trace, and Greenbriar, for example) have been replatted as subdivisions with larger lot sizes, a curvilinear street pattern, neighborhood parks, and other amenities not generally associated with the remainder of Lehigh Acres.

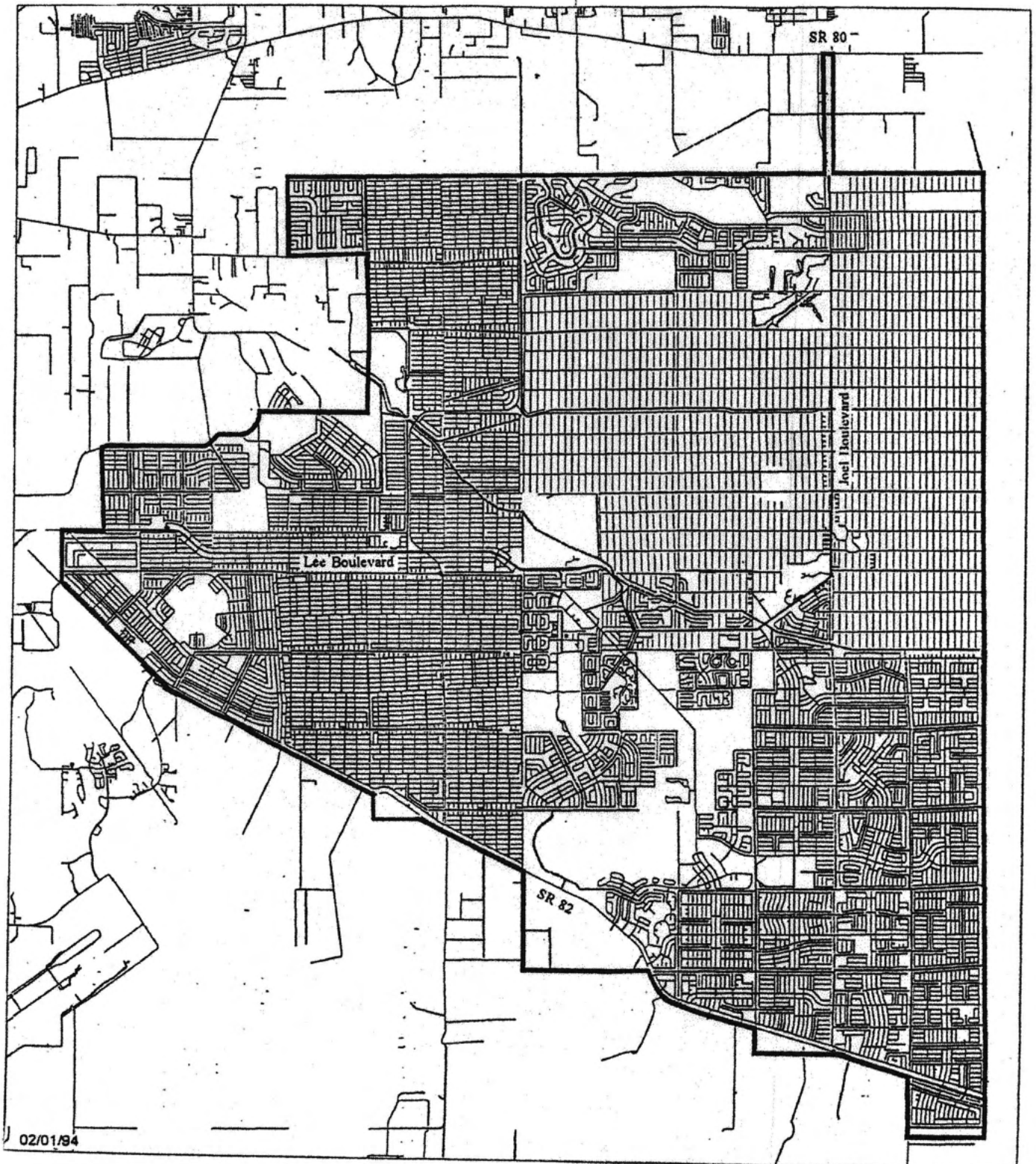
Single family development has occurred on 9,551 parcels in Lehigh Acres, for a total of 3,201.61 acres, according to the Lee County Property Appraiser.

Multifamily development in Lehigh Acres is limited to several condominium projects which total 93.21 acres. Much of the land zoned for multifamily dwellings remains vacant. The Property Appraiser's Office shows no areas in which multifamily rental properties are located.

TABLE 1 POPULATION

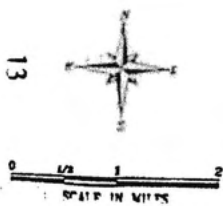
CHARACTERISTIC	LEHIGH ACRES	% OF LEHIGH POPULATION
<u>Total Persons</u>	22,100	100.00%
<u>Race:</u>		
White	20,396	92.28%
Black	1,240	5.61%
Other	464	2.09%
<u>Ethnicity:</u>		
Non-Hispanic	20,848	94.33%
Hispanic	1,152	5.21%
<u>Age:</u>		
Under 18	4,925	22.29%
18 to 64	10,568	47.82%
65 and over	6,607	29.90%
<u>Median Age</u>	38	n/a
<u>Persons per household</u>	2.7	

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1990



LEHIGH ACRES REDEVELOPMENT AREA

Exhibit 2



Although there are undoubtedly some rental properties in Lehigh Acres, they are not presently being taxed as such. In any case, the existing rental area in Lehigh Acres is small, at best, and certainly deserves a second look when planning for the future development of the community in order to provide a balanced housing stock.

Commercial Uses and Conditions

The existing commercial area of Lehigh Acres is centered in the core of the community and in strip fashion along several arterials. Total land area of developed commercial property is 93.21 acres. The commercial areas in Lehigh Acres are located primarily toward the center of the 96.47 square mile area, along Homestead Road and Lee Boulevard. A predominance of small strip shopping centers exists in these corridors. The construction of a new K-Mart, which opened in November, 1993, has created a major retail vacancy in the previous K-Mart location on Homestead Road, with potential serious future impacts on the remaining retail businesses in the former K-Mart Shopping Center. This is due in large part to the fact that, a prime tenant is often the major attractor to a shopping center. When they relocate or go out of business, the remaining tenants often find that business declines severely.

A January, 1994 CRA survey of 9 selected strip commercial centers in Lehigh Acres totalling 139 businesses, reveals an overall vacancy rate of 19.4%, several times that of a successful shopping area, according

to Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers. (See Table 4 for detailed data.)

Lehigh Acres' shopping centers cater primarily to the residents of the community, selling neighborhood goods and services. The most prominent commercial uses within strip commercial centers are small neighborhood cafes and fast food/take out restaurants (16); beauty salons (10); and travel agencies (6). The number of real estate offices within retail centers totals 9, due to the major emphasis upon land sales within the Lehigh Acres community.

There are also four small churches within retail spaces in the strip centers, a condition which often occurs when vacancies are high and rents are low.

Complaints about the commercial areas include the fact that there are very few restaurants other than fast food operations, and there is a desire to see chains such as T.G.I. Fridays or Bennigan's locate in Lehigh Acres. In addition, there are limited shopping opportunities for apparel and shoes, with residents having to travel 15 miles to Fort Myers for these items.

There are few home furnishings and accessory stores (such as furniture, carpet, tile, and lighting, among others) or appliance stores in Lehigh Acres' shopping areas, a fact which is surprising in light of the continuing high growth rate a new residential construction in the Lehigh Acres community.

TABLE 2 EXISTING LAND USE

<u>LAND USE</u>	<u># PARCELS</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>% OF TOTAL</u>
Vacant Residential	107,457.00	37,672.60	61.02 %
Vacant Commercial	1,117.00	1,049.22	1.70 %
Vacant Industrial	23.00	189.01	0.31 %
Single Family Residential	9,551.00	3,201.61	5.19 %
Multifamily Residential (rental)	0.00	0.00	0.00 %
Condominiums	n/a	93.21	0.15 %
Commercial	91.00	466.28	0.76 %
Industrial	22.00	62.58	0.10 %
Institutional (Religious, hospital)	62.00	149.72	0.23 %
Government	160.00	1,383.33	2.24 %
Agricultural	28.00	719.13	1.16 %
ROW/Canals	n/a	16,755.20	27.14 %
TOTAL	118,511.00	61,741.88	100.00 %

Note: The difference between total acres shown on Table 7 and the totals presented herein are due to a minor discrepancy in Property Appraiser's Office mapping and calculations, as tabulated in Lee County's Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

Source: Lee County Property Appraiser & CRA
January 1994

TABLE 3
Commercial Uses: Strip Shopping Centers

<u>Type of Business</u>	<u># Stores</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Vacant Stores	27	19.42%
Restaurant/take out	16	11.51%
Beauty salons	10	7.19%
Real estate offices	9	6.47%
Travel agencies	6	4.32%
Women's apparel	6	4.32%
Churches	4	2.88%
Home furnishings & accessories	4	2.88%
Medical office	4	2.88%
Laundry/cleaning	4	2.88%
Drugstores	3	2.16%
Barbershops	3	2.16%
Insurance offices	3	2.16%
Supermarkets	2	1.44%
Small grocery stores	2	1.44%
Banks	2	1.44%
Title companies	2	1.44%
Mail/shipping	2	1.44%
Florist	2	1.44%
Shoe repair	2	1.44%
Video	2	1.44%
Thrift stores	2	1.44%
Karate	2	1.44%
Electronics	2	1.44%
Gas stations	2	1.44%
Other*	16	11.51%
TOTAL	139	100.00%

*Other includes 1 each:

Aerobics, antiques, hearing aids, law office, m/w apparel, optical, paint, pawnshop, pet grooming, pets, photo, printers, signs, silk screening, tax, tv repair

TABLE 4
Vacancy Rates in Select Strip Shopping Centers

<u>Name of Center</u>	<u># Stores</u>	<u># Vacant</u>	<u>Vac. Rate</u>
Lee Boulevard Shopping Center	27	3	11.11%
Homestead Shopping Center	25	10	40.00%
Sunshine Plaza	22	6	27.27%
Homestead Plaza	21	3	14.29%
Park Place	13	2	15.38%
Former K-Mart	10	2	20.00%
Flex Bon Plaza	7	1	14.29%
Royal Plaza	7	0	0.00%
Chiarelli Plaza	7	0	0.00%
TOTAL	139	27	19.42%

Source:
Lee County CRA 1/94

Physical conditions in the neighborhood shopping centers vary. The Homestead Shopping Center has major drainage problems at each entrance to the parking lot, the lot is in need of repaving, and the facade is adorned with cedar shakes, many of which are missing. Other centers have inadequate parking layouts, with haphazard angled parking, no curb stops, and a lack of landscaping. Signs are generally inconsistent with no uniform program for size, materials, color, illumination, location, heights, or design character.

In addition to the problems affecting the existing commercial core in Lehigh Acres, the issue of lack of adequate areas zoned for commercial activity in appropriate locations is apparent in the area. The total area zoned for commercial enterprises is 1,517.8 acres, or 3.4% of the total developable land area of Lehigh Acres. Much of the commercial zoning is spread out in a linear fashion along primary arterial and connector roadways. (Lee Boulevard and Homestead Road, for example), leading to a proliferation of decentralized strip commercial centers which will, in the future, clog traffic as well as contribute to the decline of the commercial core.

Residents of outlying properties in Lehigh Acres have to travel three to four miles for everyday shopping and service activities. There is a need to consider possible future amendments to the Lee County Comprehensive Plan and the zoning ordinance to permit additional nodes of commercial activity, including small service areas with

such uses as gas stations, mini-marts, automated bank tellers, and cleaners, to accommodate the needs of Lehigh Acres residents and visitors.

Industrial

The industrial area of Lehigh Acres is located at its westernmost terminus, along the Lee Boulevard corridor. Several light industrial uses and warehouses can be found in this area, which is near the Lehigh Acres Welcome Center, approximately five miles from the center of town.

Institutional

The category of institutional land uses, as defined by the Lee County Property Appraiser, includes religious institutions, private hospitals, private schools, nursing homes and private Adult Congregate Living Facilities (ACLF's), cemeteries and mortuaries, orphanages, and private clubs, lodges, and union halls. The predominant institutional uses in Lehigh Acres are the religious institutions scattered throughout the community and East Pointe Hospital.

East Pointe Hospital is located adjacent to the central commercial core of the community on Lee Boulevard. East Pointe is a full-service medical facility providing emergency room care, maternity wards, and other medical services. The hospital is also a major employer in the area. Existing development near the hospital includes medical office buildings, an ACLF (Cross Key Manor)

and other medical-related facilities. It is likely that the hospital could become a primary destination point for many residents of Lehigh Acres, if the national trend toward the establishment of on-campus medical offices (diagnostic centers, MRI facilities, and radiology centers, for example) continues. In addition, the potential for mid-rise development for housing for hospital employees, particularly nurses, in the immediate vicinity is another national trend which may be considered in lieu of additional strip commercial development along Lee Boulevard.

There are presently 27 churches and one synagogue in Lehigh Acres. Generally, they occupy significantly sized parcels of land throughout the community, with the exception of the few storefront churches discussed earlier.

Recreation and Open Space

Exhibit 2 shows the locations and relative sizes of land devoted to parks and recreational activities.

Lehigh Acres currently has two public parks - the 18 acre Lee Community Park, located in the center portion of Lehigh Acres, off of Lee Boulevard, and the newly constructed 46 acre Lehigh Acres Community Park South, located on Homestead Road.

Facilities at Lee Community Park include: lighted tennis courts, lighted athletic fields, a pool, tot lot, and picnic tables. There is minimal landscaping at Lee Community

Park, with no attractive passive park areas. Barbed wire fencing surrounds portions of Lee Community Park, offering a less than pleasing atmosphere for park users and passersby.

Facilities at Lehigh Acres Community Park South include a 22-foot play mountain, a skateboard rink (currently covered with graffiti); basketball court, a picnic pavilion with kitchen, volleyball courts, and open fields. Scheduled for construction are baseball and softball fields and an indoor recreational facility.

The Lehigh Acres Senior Center, located on Plaza Drive is a programmed facility for senior citizens which offers a wide variety of classes and activities. Facilities adjacent to the Senior Center include an exercise trail, bocce ball court, and shuffleboard courts.

Within several of the newer planned neighborhoods of Lehigh Acres are small neighborhood parks consisting of tot lots, picnic tables, and passive amenities. These parks are owned and maintained by the various developers and homeowners associations, with signs indicating that they are private and open only to members of the respective associations.

Additional private facilities are located at the several country clubs in Lehigh Acres and include the Mirror Lakes Pool and Lehigh Acres Racquet Club.

Lee County Community Park

BUCKINGHAM ROAD

Mirror Lakes Golf Club
Cypress Pines Golf Course

Admiral Lehigh Resort
Golf Course

Lehigh Acres Community
Park South

LEHIGH COUNTY

LEGEND

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION



Exhibit 3

LEE COUNTY COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

LEHIGH ACRES
REDEVELOPMENT

				DATE: 02/01/84
SHEET 0	1/2 1	2	NORTH	REVISION: ...
SCALE: 1" = 1/4" AS SHOWN				

There are three 18-hole courses in Lehigh Acres. They are the Admiral Lehigh Acres Resort Golf Course, located off of Leeland Heights and Joel Boulevards, and Mirror Lakes and Cypress Pines on both sides of Homestead Road in the southern area of Lehigh Acres.

Surrounding and adjacent to one of Lehigh Acres' newest neighborhoods, Greenbriar, is a proposed greenbelt and a 400 acre natural preserve. Lehigh Acres contains several small man-made lakes, including Mirror Lake at the southern end of Lehigh Acres.

There are also 175 miles of inland canals, which are generally poorly maintained - full of trash and debris - and stagnant.

Levels of Service for Recreation and Open Space

The Lee County Comprehensive Plan indicates an adopted level of service for Standard Community Parks of 0.8 acres per 1,000 population for public use. Additionally, Policy 58.1.1 of the Plan recommends the facilities and size of these community parks. They should be 40 to 60 acres in size, with 4 ballfields, 6 tennis courts, 4 racquetball courts, a playground, a picnic area, and restrooms.

With the existing population of approximately 30,000 in Lehigh Acres and, at build-out, additional parks and recreational facilities will be necessary, along with renovations to the existing Lee Community Park.

Further, the National Recreation and Park Association recommends the following additional standards for smaller parks:

A Mini-park is 1/2 acre to 5 acres and serves up to 2000 people.

A Neighborhood Park is approximately 5 acres generally passive. It serves up to 4000 people within a radius of 1/2 mile. Often, neighborhood parks are joint use facilities with local schools and the local government.

Education

Lehigh Acres is served by two elementary schools and one middle school. Total enrollment for the three existing schools has increased by more than a third since 1986, a trend which is expected to continue as Lehigh Acres' growth increases. See Table 5: School Enrollment.

Approximately 1,000 high school students in Lehigh Acres attend nearby Riverdale High School on Buckingham Road and State Road 80. A new high school is presently under construction on Gunnery Road in Lehigh Acres, scheduled to open in August, 1994. The projected enrollment is 2,700, although not all of the students will be Lehigh Acres residents.

Lehigh Acres Elementary School is presently over capacity, as is Sunshine Elementary. Portable trailers are

used for classrooms. An expansion/renovation of Sunshine Elementary School is presently underway, which will alleviate the current overcrowding problems.

Although there are no post-secondary educational institutions located within the Lehigh Acres community, the site for Florida's new "10th University" has been designated on a tract of land on Alico Road approximately 10 miles south of Lehigh Acres. It is scheduled to open in mid-1997.

With the construction of the Alico Road and Daniels Road extensions into Lehigh Acres, the area has great potential for housing for both University employees and students, due to its close proximity and moderate land/housing prices.

One factor which should be considered in a future master plan for Lehigh Acres is the potential impact of the University upon the community and the potential for a modification to existing land use regulations limiting the nearby areas to single family development. A mix of owner and renter occupied housing and a variety of affordable housing types could make Lehigh Acres an excellent location for University employees and students to live.

**TABLE 5
LEHIGH SCHOOL ENROLLMENT**

School	Enrollment				Capacity	# Over/Under Capacity
	<u>8/86</u>	<u>8/90</u>	<u>8/92</u>	<u>11/93</u>		
Lehigh Elementary (grades 1-5)	682	993	922	985	955	+30
Sunshine Elementary (grades 1-5)	658	953	852	891	943	-52
Lehigh Middle School (grades 6-8)	622	712	858	785	956	-171
TOTAL	1962	2658	2632	2661	2854	n/a

Note: Capacity at Sunshine Elem. will be 943 when expansion is complete.

Source: School District of Lee County
January 1994

Library

Nearing construction is a new Lee County Regional Library, located adjacent to the new high school on Gunnery Road. The library will be a 20,000 square foot facility constructed on a 12.2 parcel. Residents of Lehigh Acres have indicated that they would prefer a library branch located closer to the central core of the community, where a small library facility is presently located.

Public Safety

Within Lehigh Acres are three fire stations and one Sheriff's substation. One interesting feature of the Sheriff's Office system is that many of the deputies who serve the community also live in Lehigh Acres, giving them additional insight into the public safety needs of the residents and business owners.

Other Public Facilities and Services

Other facilities serving the residents of Lehigh Acres include a satellite office of the Lee County Tax Collector, the Public Health Unit, and Lehigh Acres Community Services.

Lot Size

As was noted earlier in this chapter, Lehigh Acres is predominantly laid out in a straight grid pattern, with 117,008 individual parcels of residential property (excluding existing condominiums). The existing single family homes have an average lot size of 0.335 acres or 14,593 square feet. Vacant residential parcel sizes are only slightly larger, with an average size of 0.350 acres (15,246 square feet). See Table 2, Existing Land Use, for additional data on parcels and acreages.

Several of the newer single family developments have been replatted to provide slightly larger lot sizes, along with curvilinear street patterns which modify lot configurations to some extent. Additional areas for potential replatting and modification to lot sizes need to be considered in future planning for Lehigh Acres.

Existing commercial development has an average parcel size of 5.12 acres per parcel, which is representative of the larger existing individually owned shopping center development in Lehigh Acres. Interestingly enough, vacant commercial parcel sizes are significantly smaller than the existing, with an average size of only 0.94 acres per parcel.

This data indicates that additional study needs to be made to find methods to discourage extensive development of small, individual one acre commercial developments and to provide incentives for larger scale commercial activity where appropriate.

Ownership

Most of the developed parcels in Lehigh Acres are owned by individuals who have purchased single family homesites. The largest property owner in the community is the "new" Lehigh Acres Corporation, which owns approximately 3,700 acres, or 6% of the total redevelopment area.

The Lehigh Acres Corporation was purchased by Minnesota Power in 1991, and their goal is to sell developable tracts to builders and developers, as well as individual lot sales. Consequently, a new ownership pattern is emerging, which should have a positive effect upon the overall Lehigh Acres area. As builders such as Arthur Rutenberg and Co. and others acquire significant vacant properties, they are replatting and improving upon the grid configuration which previously occurred throughout the area.

There is a general lack of available data on existing ownership patterns, due to some limitations in the County's Geographic Information System programs.

Traffic and Transportation

The traffic network in Lehigh Acres consists primarily of local roads which are configured in a grid pattern. The majority of these roads were constructed a number of years ago, and they surround vast tracts of vacant land. Although much of the local roadway network is rarely used, future development will necessitate the repaving and improvement of the roads which are owned and maintained by Lee County. Exhibit 3 is the Lee County Interim Traffic Circulation Plan Map.

According to the Lee County Comprehensive Plan, "backlogged roads" are those roadway segments operating (under existing conditions or short-term projections) below the adopted level of service standard.

Leeland Heights Boulevard from Lee Boulevard to Joel Boulevard is classified as a backlogged road. It is a State maintenance responsibility. The Lee Plan recommends restriping to provide two-way left-turn lane.

The Lee County Comprehensive Plan has established minimum acceptable Levels of Service for roads as follows: County arterials and collectors are level "E", State principal arterials are level "D", and State minor arterials and others are level "E".

Levels of Service are indicators of the degree of smooth traffic flow on any given roadway, with a level of service "A" being a free-flowing circulation pattern and "F" being gridlock during peak hours.

Below is a list of Lee County roadway projects identified in the Lee Plan for the improvement of backlogged and constrained roads:

1. Daniels Road - Construct Two-lane road from Gateway Boulevard to St. Road 82.
2. Homestead Road at Beth Stacey - Install new signal and improve geometrics.
3. Homestead Road at Lee Boulevard - Install new signal and rebuild intersection.
4. Leeland Heights Boulevard at Lee Boulevard - Install new signal.

Table 6 on the following page shows maintenance responsibilities for various roadways within Lehigh Acres and existing levels of service for each.

Table 6
Roadway Maintenance Responsibilities and Levels of Service

<u>Roadway</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Level of Service</u>
Lee Blvd. from SR 82 to Homestead Road	State	E
Lee Blvd. from Homestead Rd. to Leeland Heights Blvd.	State	E
Joel Boulevard from Leeland Heights Boulevard to 18th Street	State	A
Joel Boulevard from 18th St to SR 80	State	A
Gunnery Road - from Buckingham Road to Lee Boulevard	County	A
Gunnery Road - from Lee Boulevard to SR82	County	E
Daniels extension from Gateway to SR 82	County	N/A
Leeland Heights from Joel Boulevard to Richmond Avenue	State	B
Leeland Heights from Richmond Avenue to Lee Boulevard	State	F
Leeland Heights from Lee Boulevard to Homestead Road	County	A

Source: Lee County Amendments to the Lee Plan, 1990

Note: The Levels of Service shown above are based upon existing plus committed road network improvements.

LEE COUNTY
METROPOLITAN PLANNING
ORGANIZATION
2010 FINANCIALLY-FEASIBLE PLAN
ADOPTED NOVEMBER 17, 1968
ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

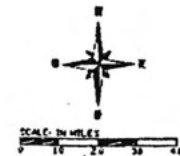
LEGEND

- Freeways
 - 4 lanes
- Expressways
 - 2 lanes
 - 4 lanes
 - 6 lanes
- Divided Arterials
or Collectors
 - 2 lanes
 - 4 lanes
 - 6 lanes
- Undivided Arterials
or Collectors
 - 2 lanes
 - 4 lanes
- One-way Pair
 - 3 lanes
- Bridge Connector
 - 2 lanes

See Policy 21.1.1 for modifications that were made to this map by Lee County when adapting it as the Interim Traffic Circulation Plan Map.

The road alignments shown here are generalized. The actual alignments will be determined in detailed project design studies.

INTERIM TRAFFIC CIRCULATION PLAN MAP



147
148
Exhibit 4

Map 3

Pedestrian Amenities

Identified community concerns in Lehigh Acres include the lack of sidewalks and inadequate pedestrian circulation, along with a lack of bike paths throughout the community.

As is noted in the Blight Study, dated November 1993, all of the major core streets (Lee Boulevard, Leeland Heights Boulevard, Joel Boulevard, Gunnery Road, Sunshine Boulevard, Beth Stacey Boulevard, Alabama Road, Homestead Road, Alexander Graham Bell Boulevard, and Milwaukee Boulevard) are either lacking sidewalks and bike paths or, when present, they are discontinuous and in need of repair.

Generally, these areas are characterized by both pedestrian and bicycle activity, creating a situation that is dangerous and inconvenient. Additionally, crosswalks, handicapped curb cuts, and pedestrian signalization are generally absent.

Within the residential areas, the only sidewalks are in the new subdivisions, such as Oakwood and Mirror Lakes. The majority of the single family areas of Lehigh lack sidewalks and bike paths.

Also listed as a community concern is the lack of bus shelters throughout Lehigh Acres.

Section 2.4
ZONING

The predominant zoning classification in Lehigh Acres is the RS-1, Residential Single Family District. District regulations for RS-1 include minimum lot areas of 7,500 square feet, with minimum widths of 75 feet and minimum depths of 100 feet. Setback requirements are as follows: Street - variable depending on functional classification of roadway; Side - 7.5 feet; Rear - 20 feet; and Water Body - 25 feet. Lot coverage is limited to 40% of the lot area. 48,636 acres in Lehigh Acres are zoned for single family residential uses (see Table 7).

Multifamily zoning districts in Lehigh Acres include 166 individual parcels of land, totalling 5,340.4 acres. The most predominant multifamily zoning classification is the RM-2 Residential Multifamily District, which limits development to the lowest densities of any of Lee County's six multifamily zoning classifications. Minimum lot sizes in the RM-2 districts are as follows:

- Residential Uses
 - Area - 7,500 square feet
 - Width - 75 feet
 - Depth - 100 feet
- 2. Non-residential uses
 - Area - 10,000 square feet
 - Width - 75 feet
 - Depth - 100 feet

The maximum permitted densities are those which are specified in the Lee County Comprehensive Plan category for which the property is located. (See Chapter 1, Section 1.4; Consistency with the Lee Plan for more detailed information.) In the case of Lehigh Acres, these are generally the "Urban Community areas". Standard density ranges from one dwelling unit per acre to six dwelling units per acre, with a maximum of 10 dwelling units per acre.

Some RM-2 areas near the center of the town fall within the "Central Urban" land use classification, which has a slightly higher standard density range from five dwelling units per acre to ten dwelling units per acre and a maximum allowed density of 15 dwelling units per acre.

Maximum lot coverage in RM-2 Districts is 45%, and the height is limited to 35 feet.

With the exception of several isolated condominium projects, representing less than one tenth of one percent of Lehigh Acres' land area, the multifamily districts are primarily undeveloped or underdeveloped with single family dwellings. Locationally, the multifamily districts are scattered throughout Lehigh Acres. Additional study needs to be conducted to determine the needs and desires for additional multifamily zoned areas located near activity centers and along major arteries, such as the proposed Daniels Road extension.

TABLE 7 EXISTING ZONING

<u>ZONING CLASSIFICATION</u>	<u>PARCELS</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>% OF TOTAL</u>
Agricultural Districts	70	4,768.72	7.85%
Residential Single Family	283	48,635.60	80.09%
Residential Multi-Family	166	5,340.36	8.80%
Commercial Districts	138	1,517.85	2.50%
Industrial Districts	6	464.84	0.77%
TOTAL	663	60,727.37	100.00%

Note: The difference between total acres shown in Table 2 and the totals presented herein are due to a minor discrepancy in the Property Appraiser's Office mapping and calculations, as tabulated in Lee County's Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

Source: Lee County Property Appraiser
January 1994

Commercial zoning is concentrated in the central core of Lehigh Acres and running in a strip fashion along major roadways such as Homestead Road, Lee Boulevard, and Leeland Heights Boulevard.

The most predominant commercial zoning category is C-2, which is essentially an obsolete zoning classification, due in large part to the wide range of uses permitted, including industrial. According to the Lee County Zoning Ordinance, "It is ... the intent of the Board of County Commissioners that all land zoned C-2 shall be rezoned to more appropriate districts as soon and as expeditiously as possible". No future areas are permitted to be rezoned to the C-2 classification, which also permits light industrial activities as well as commercial activities.

A major effort of the redevelopment planning process for Lehigh Acres should be to develop appropriate commercial zoning classifications for the existing C-2 areas, which would encourage concentrated commercial development with uses appropriate to the Lehigh Acres community, such as planned CPD (Commercial Planned Development) Districts.

A second effort should include the review of the existing areas zoned for commercial uses, with the intent to lessen the alluringness of sprawling strip shopping centers and to increase the economic viability of the commercial core, along with the provision of neighborhood service centers in outlying locations.

Section 2.5 ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Generally, environmental concerns center around protection of natural resources and compatibility of existing and proposed development with the surrounding natural habitat, including protection of plants and animal life and wetlands, soil conditions, etc. Since Lehigh Acres was drained and a majority of the land was cleared a number of years ago, there are no significant environmental constraints to future development.

Several stands of oak and pine hammocks are still remaining in Lehigh Acres, and measures should be taken to ensure that they are conserved to the greatest extent possible.

Bedman Creek, Hickey Creek, and Orange River are located in the northern section of the redevelopment area. This redevelopment plan does not call for impacting these areas. All efforts will be made to protect the integrity of these watersheds.

In terms of animal species habitats, the most notable is the gopher tortoise, which is a protected species. The Lee County Division of Natural Resources has not inventoried the habitats of the gopher tortoise, although they are known to exist in Lehigh Acres.

Soils and Vegetation

According to the Lee County Comprehensive Plan, the predominant soil type throughout the majority of Lehigh is the Oldsmar-Malabar-Immokalee soil type with some concentration of the Pineda-Boca-Wabasso soils in the area north of Lee Boulevard and directly east of Joel Boulevard. There are no significant soils in the majority of Lehigh Acres.

Exhibit 5 shows the areas of significant vegetation in Lehigh Acres. They are generally to the north of Lee Boulevard and extend for at least a mile to the east and west of Joel Boulevard. These areas contain significant amounts of native pines and some concentrations of oaks. Future development should take into consideration the remaining hammocks.

Floodplains

Lehigh Acres is located on some of the highest ground in Lee County. According the Federal Emergency Management Agency 1984 maps, there are no areas of Lehigh which fall into the category of flooding by tidal surge in a 100 year storm. Also, the area is not projected to be flooded by rainfall in a 100 year storm.

Section 2.6 INFRASTRUCTURE

Stormwater Drainage

As noted above, Lehigh Acres does not have some of the severe drainage problems in other areas of the County because of its topography and inland location. A system of open drainage culverts runs through the majority of Lehigh Acres, which poses potential future problems with clogging/backup and water quality. Street drainage problems have been noted, and some privately developed commercial parcels with large paved parking areas have experienced drainage backups.

Water Distribution System

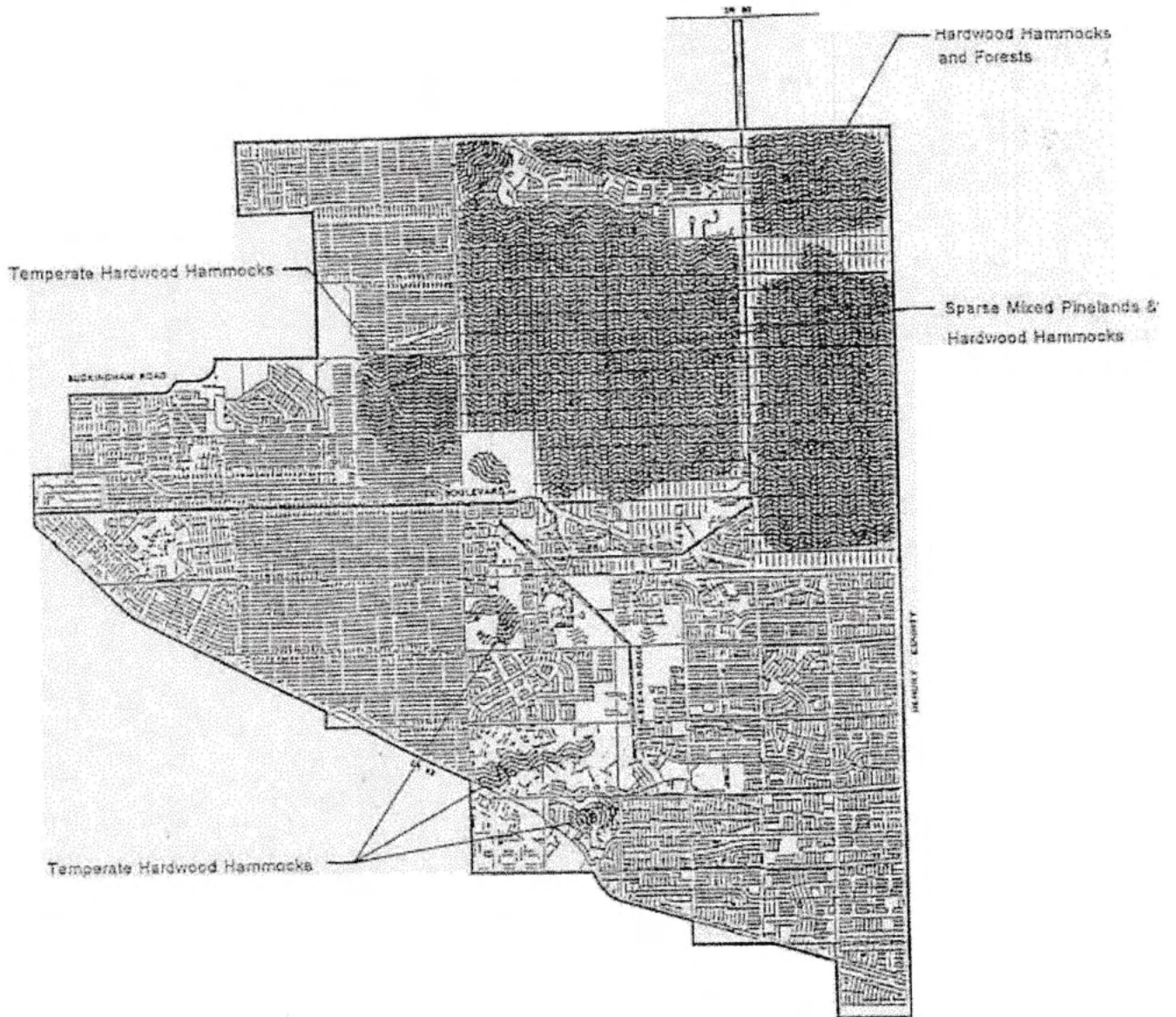
The water distribution system serves a slightly larger area than the wastewater collection system. Water is available to primarily the central core of Lehigh Acres with the remaining residents relying upon wells. Exhibit 6 shows the water distribution area in Lehigh Acres.

Wastewater Collection

Southern States Utilities of Apopka, Florida provides sewers which serve primarily the central core of Lehigh Acres. Additional installations serve residential areas to the south along Homestead Road. Exhibit 7 shows the wastewater collection system in Lehigh Acres.

Wastewater is collected and flows to the treatment plant near Homestead Road and Lee Boulevard. After the wastewater has been treated the majority of the water is used to irrigate the Admiral Lehigh Resort & golf course. The remaining water is retained in evaporation ponds to evaporate and percolate into the soil.

Source: Southern States Utilities



LEGEND

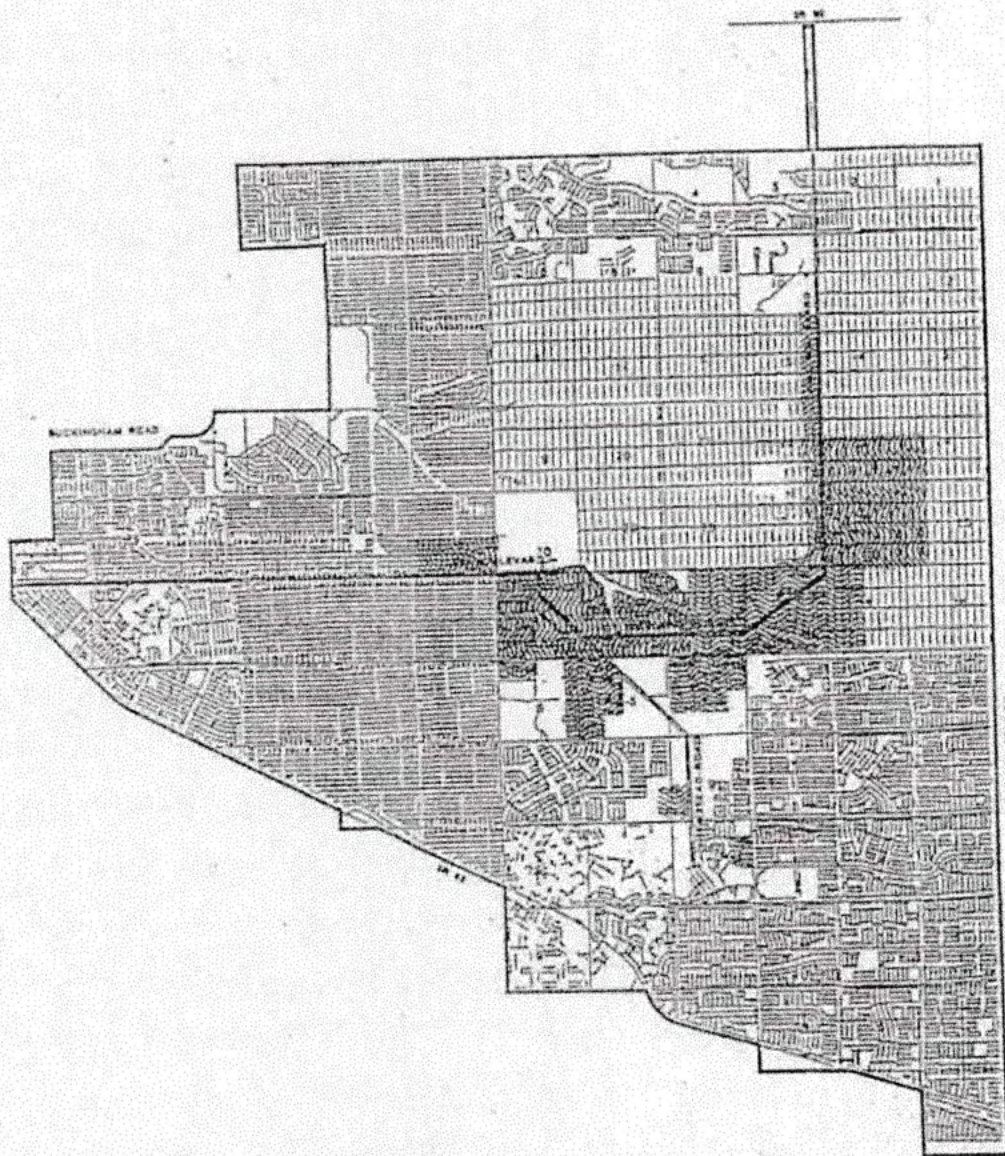
SIGNIFICANT VEGETATION 

LEE COUNTY COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

LEHIGH ACRES
REDEVELOPMENT

Exhibit 5

	DATE: 02/01/94
SHEET 8	REVISION: 1
1/2	1
1	NORTH SCALE: 1"=1/2 MI



LEGEND

WATER DISTRIBUTION



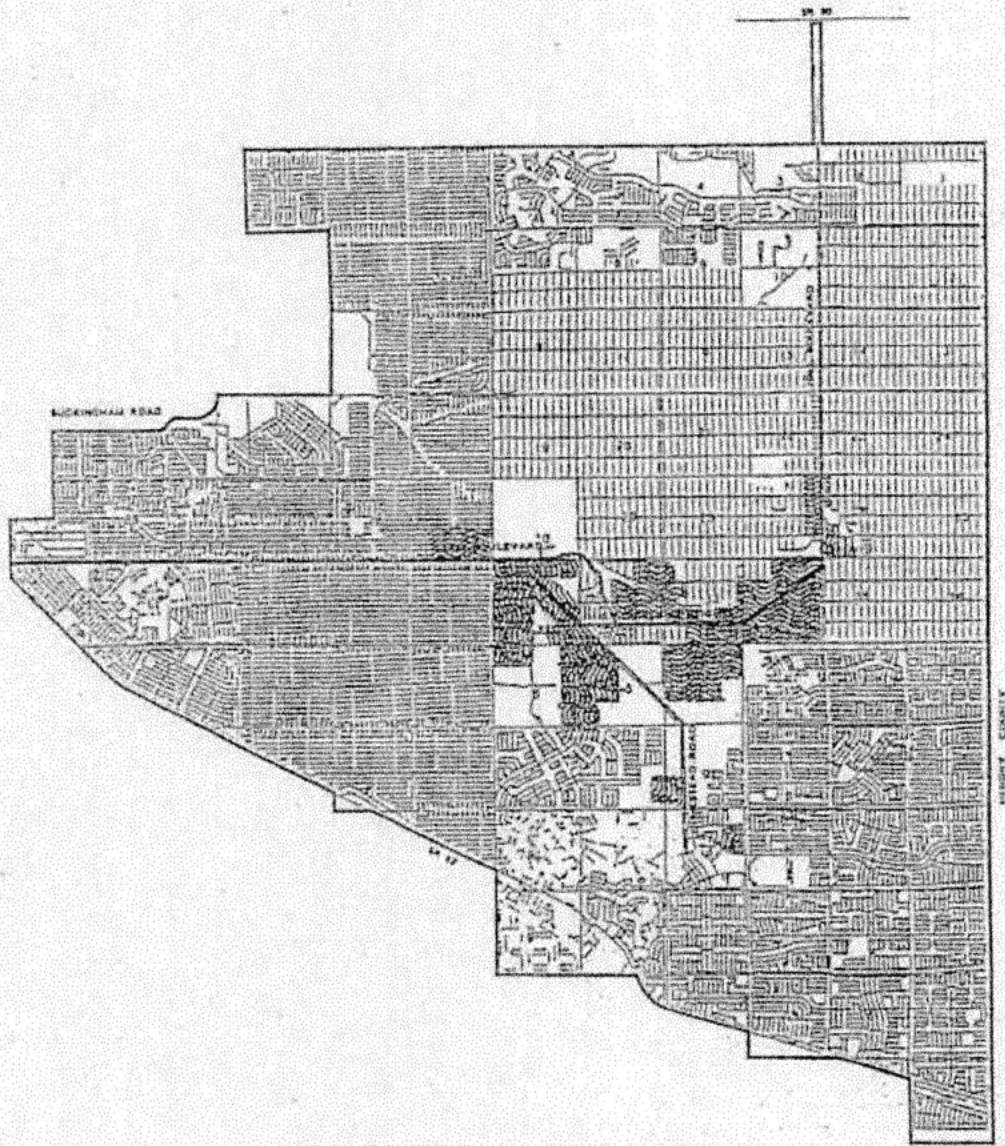
Exhibit 6

Source: Southern States Utilities

LEE COUNTY COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

LEHIGH ACRES
REDEVELOPMENT

	DATE: 02/01/84
	REVISION:
SHEET 6	SCALE: P1:W4



LEGEND


WASTEWATER COLLECTION 

Exhibit 7

Source: Southern States Utilities

LEE COUNTY COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

LEHIGH ACRES
REDEVELOPMENT

				DATE: 02/01/94
SHEET 8	02	1	2	REVISION:
NORTH				SCALE: 1"=1/4"

3. THE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Section 3.1 THE PLAN PROCESS

By relying on various community interaction techniques, community issues were identified and strategies for resolving these issues are illustrated in this plan. The guiding force in the evolution of this redevelopment plan has been the Lehigh Acres community members, which includes the Local Redevelopment Planning Committee (LRPC).

A total of five Public Workshops and numerous LRPC meetings were held in an attempt to accurately reflect the needs and ambitions of the Lehigh Acres community.

This redevelopment plan is the end result of the community's aspirations. The Lee County Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) is the technical mechanism that assisted the community with applying their concepts to the redevelopment plan.

The first step in the Lehigh Acres redevelopment process was to involve community members in issue analysis. The initial result of this process was the identification of problems that existed in the Lehigh Acres community. The next step in the issue analysis process was to turn the community problems into identifiable projects. The community was then asked to rank these projects in terms of significance, and attach goal statements and solutions

to these issues.

The next step in the redevelopment plan process was to incorporate the projects into a Community Plan. The Lehigh Acres Community Plan incorporates all the projects derived from the Issue Analysis exercise into a framework for addressing the identified projects.

All projects identified by the community were then divided into phases, which establishes a time frame for implementation. This phasing provides a logical approach for the construction of redevelopment projects in the redevelopment area.

Section 3.2 THE PLAN CONCEPT

This is the first formal, comprehensive plan to be completed to direct future growth in Lehigh Acres. The plan addresses Lehigh Acres in its entirety, considering all the functional as well as aesthetic elements which can make a community an enjoyable place in which to live.

The plan defines the community as a series of distinct, individual neighborhoods connected at the center with a central business district. Within each neighborhood, exist smaller commercial centers which serve as focal

points of the neighborhood. They are oriented to the everyday needs of the residents. Additional components of each neighborhood are community centers which are strategically located to reduce the need for the use of personal automobiles. These community centers could be future schools, libraries, recreational centers or other support facilities.

The element which unifies all the neighborhoods into a whole is the open space network which encircles Lehigh Acres. Linkages to secondary canal pathways lead pedestrians from the edges of the community to the center.

Within the heart of Lehigh Acres lies the grand central canal which flows into the lower creeks of the Orange River. This canal could serve as a destination point for recreation, and Civic activities such as outdoor concerts and craft shows, while providing a natural landscape amenity to the central business core.

The transportation network is defined into a hierarchy of streets which operate as arterials, collectors and local streets. "Gateways" are proposed along major roadways at the point of entry to Lehigh Acres to strengthen the sense of arrival.

In addition, special treatment of major arterials can improve the motorist's sense of journey through the community to the center. Roadway extensions are proposed to improve Lehigh Acres' connection to the

regional transportation network of the Greater Southwest Florida area.

This plan follows urban design principles which give significant consideration to the existing neighborhoods and the existing commercial area which serves them.

The elements also address gateways and sense of place, boulevards and spines of business activity, and nodes of activity occurring in the heart of each neighborhood allowing people to gain access to services with ease.

Section 3.3

ISSUE ANALYSIS/NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Residential

1. Identify areas with significant vacant tracts for potential replatting/re-subdivision to provide larger lots, elimination of some streets, maximize open space, and increase lot size.
2. Encourage multifamily development in appropriate locations to provide balanced mix of affordable housing.

Commercial

Attract new commercial tenants to existing shopping centers to increase occupancy rates in them.

2. Improve physical conditions in existing centers through a facade program, design guidelines for commercial buildings, and/or a grant/low interest loan program for shopping centers.
3. Improve the mix of retail businesses in Lehigh Acres, with emphasis on apparel stores, home furnishings, accessories, and appliance outlets.
4. Consider a master plan that will discourage linear strip commercial development. Possible features include;
 - a) CRA initiated re-zoning of obsolete zoning categories into more appropriate light commercial, multi-family, and residential categories.
 - b) Transportation planning such as access roads, shared access and limited access networks in order to protect Level of Service (LOS) and to promote safe pedestrian movements.
5. Consider in a master plan for Lehigh Acres the creation of a central "downtown" identity for the community, along with mechanisms to discourage the proliferation of strip commercial centers, with their heavy reliance upon the automobile.

Education

1. Joint school/county shared recreational facilities for community facility use.
2. Identification of locations for new elementary schools.
3. Study potential for mix of housing types to attract 10th University employees and students.

Library

Since it is unlikely, due to budgetary constraints, that two major library facilities will be operated in such close proximity to one another, perhaps a more plausible solution to accommodate the needs and desires of Lehigh Acres residents is to:

Develop a public transportation linkage between the library, central core, and nearby residential areas. This could be accomplished through either a shuttle/trolley system or an expansion of the existing Lee Tran service. Also, the addition of a satellite branch library could be considered as the community expands.

Public Safety

Residents have indicated the desire to construct two additional Lehigh Acres Sheriff or law enforcement substations in the future. While it is unlikely that the Sheriff's Office has the resources to expand to this degree at the present time, perhaps it is possible to:

1. Acquire a Mobile Substation/Command Post which could be relocated throughout the community at scheduled intervals. (This concept is similar to that of a Bookmobile and has successfully been implemented in other cities throughout Florida and the United States.)

Other possible improvements to public safety include the following:

2. Adopt Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) techniques for residential and commercial areas. These techniques include improved standards of lighting, increased visibility, enhancements to the pedestrian environment to encourage increased usage, and many other design mechanisms. The theory of CPTED programs is that, if areas are designed to be open, well-lit, and actively used by the public, the opportunities to commit crimes are lessened, and the area becomes unappealing to potential perpetrators.

3. Consider creation of a Neighborhood Watch Program to reduce crime and increase public perceptions of community safety.

Traffic and Transportation

1. Develop a pilot project, using a competitive process, to allow bus shelters to display paid advertising. In these cases, bus shelter companies construct shelters at their cost with an advertising panel on them. Revenues from the ads are used to pay for the construction and maintenance of each shelter. Within reason, these shelters can be designed to the specifications set forth by the community
2. Consider including in a contract the construction of either non-advertising shelters or public service announcement shelters in various locations.
3. Enhance connections from the northeast side of Homestead Road to the southwest side in the central core area of Lehigh Acres. There are limited cross streets at the present time.
4. Additional loop roads and connections surrounding the central core need to be made to draw residents from the surrounding residential areas into and out of the commercial core. This would help to alleviate the congestion on both Homestead Road and Leeland Heights Boulevard.

5. Consider a master plan an element that considers road network analysis, design and redesign of arterials, beltways, and transportation development throughout the entire community.

Parks & Recreation

1. Need for additional small public neighborhood and/or mini-parks throughout Lehigh Acres.
2. Large tracts of vacant land are needed for possible land banking for recreation and open space acquisition i.e. future regional county or state park.
3. Need for cleanup/flushing of canals for environmental reasons as well as improved open space appearance.
4. Improve central core by landscaping and using canal system as open space/recreational areas.
5. Sufficient land area is needed adjacent to several major arterials/connectors for construction of landscaped medians and/or street tree planting programs.
6. Creation of canal front amenities in central core by orienting new commercial development toward two core canals.

Section 3.4

COMMUNITY GOALS AND PRIORITY PROJECTS

Through a series of workshops sponsored by the Lee County CRA, the Lehigh Acres community was asked to identify goals and projects to be considered in the redevelopment plan.

The projects identified by the community are addressed in the context of the Lehigh Acres Conceptual Plan (Exhibit 7).

The following pages contain the goals and priority projects that were identified by Lehigh Acres residents at these workshops.

Below is a general summary of the projects that are priority concerns of the Lehigh Acres community:

Sidewalks

Bike Paths

Canal Bridges

Increased Police Protection

Bus Shelters

Gunnery Road Improvements

Right of Way Beautification

Street Lighting

Commercial Zoning

Community Signs

Community Goals

1. To provide a community bike path and sidewalk system that would protect the safety and welfare of pedestrians.
2. Increase police protection to provide a safer and more marketable community.
3. Develop bus shelters to protect the welfare of people using public transportation and to increase ridership on Lee Tran.
4. Make Gunnery Road enhancements to provide for the safety and welfare of young adults and community members who will use the new public library and high school.
5. Provide right of way beautification to increase the opportunity to develop a comprehensive landscape identity that would encourage a sense of

neighborhood, community pride, and economic development.

6. Address the lack of street lighting to prevent accidents, increase resident safety, allow for better direction, and to create a sense of security.
7. Increase commercial zoning to provide for commercial opportunities and long term economic stability by the development of appropriate zoning and land use relationships.
8. Install community signs to develop a cohesive community image by producing a recognizable graphic and architectural identity.

PRIORITY #1

GOAL: Provide a community bike path and sidewalk system that would protect the safety and welfare of pedestrians."

PROJECT: BUILD SIDEWALKS AND BIKE PATHS

SOLUTION: Build more sidewalks/bike paths
Use TIF money
Have property owners pick-up cost
Conduct study for sidewalk/bikeway layout

WHERE: Where study indicates
Homestead Road
Lee Boulevard
Joel Boulevard
Around all schools
Around all parks
Around all community facilities

BLIGHT CRITERIA SATISFIED? Yes
CONSTRUCTION OR PROGRAM PROJECT?
Construction

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:
Consider the development of a community sidewalk/bikeway system after recommendations are received from a study designed to display pedestrian traffic patterns. This study will be an element of the master plan for the Lehigh Acres community. Use TIF money to finance study.

PRIORITY #2

GOAL: Improve response time for emergency vehicles and increase convenience of residents."

PROJECT: BUILD MORE BRIDGES OVER CANALS

SOLUTION: Build new bridges
Use TIF money
Defer project to Lee County Water Control District
Conduct study for bridge needs

WHERE: Yvonne Avenue at SW 15th Street
Amberwood to Homestead
Alabama & Westminster
Where study indicates

BLIGHT CRITERIA SATISFIED? No
CONSTRUCTION OR PROGRAM PROJECT?
Construction

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:
The lack of canal bridges has not been referenced as a community blight characteristic for Lehigh Acres. Use the Lehigh Acres LRPC as a the coordinating entity to facilitate an ongoing dialogue with the Lee County Water Control District and East County Department of Transportation.

PRIORITY #3

GOAL: Provide a safer more marketable community.

PROJECT: INCREASE POLICE PROTECTION

SOLUTION: Work with county patrols to adjust patrolling
Incorporate
Private security paid by residents
Develop neighborhood watch program
Add 2 more Lehigh Substations
Use TIF money

WHERE: Areas which are 40% developed
In areas of high growth
In lower density areas

BLIGHT CRITERIA SATISFIED? Yes
CONSTRUCTION OR PROGRAM PROJECT?
Construction

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The Lehigh Acres LRPC could be a liaison with the Lee County Sheriffs Office to improve on the current levels of police protection available in the community. Perhaps CRA staff could introduce crime prevention environmental design standards to the community. This element could be a part of the Lehigh Acres master plan.

PRIORITY #4

GOAL: Protect the welfare of people using public transportation and increase ridership on Lee Tran."

PROJECT: CONSTRUCT BUS SHELTERS

SOLUTION: Build new bus shelters in place of present benches
Maintain same design for all bus shelters
Conduct study to identify key stops
Use TIF money
Involve community businesses in financing

WHERE: At existing Lee Tran stops
Where study indicates

BLIGHT CRITERIA SATISFIED? Yes
CONSTRUCTION OR PROGRAM PROJECT?
Construction

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Using TIF dollars, undertake a study that would address community needs pertaining to public transportation. This study would be a part of the Lehigh Acres master plan. The development of bus shelters would reflect issues addressed in the master plan.

PRIORITY #5

GOAL: Provide for the safety and welfare of young adults and community members who use the roadway."

PROJECT: GUNNERY ROAD ENHANCEMENTS

SOLUTION: Improve road geometry
Improve intersection geometry
Install crosswalks
Network with Department of Transportation
Use TIF money

WHERE: Gunnery Road
Around schools and library

BLIGHT CRITERIA SATISFIED? Yes
CONSTRUCTION OR PROGRAM PROJECT?
Construction

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:
Major road improvements should be addressed by Lee County Capital Improvement Project programs and the Metropolitan Planning Organization. CRA staff recommends concentrating on roadway and pedestrian safety issues, such as; pedestrian access, crosswalks, additional traffic signals including pedestrian activated stop lights, and, additional sidewalks and bike paths. All of these elements would be considered in the master plan.

PRIORITY #6

GOAL: Develop a comprehensive landscape identity that would encourage a sense of neighborhood, community pride, and economic development."

PROJECT: RIGHT OF WAY BEAUTIFICATION

SOLUTION: Pick up litter
Add Landscaping
Provide design guidelines
Conduct study to determine needs
Stimulate local clubs to contribute and maintain
Use TIF money

WHERE: SR 82 and Colonial extension
Lee Boulevard
All new business locations
Along main corridors
Joel Boulevard
Gunnery Road

BLIGHT CRITERIA SATISFIED? Yes

CONSTRUCTION OR PROGRAM PROJECT?
Construction

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:
Develop roadway right of way design standards for Lehigh Acres in the master plan.

PRIORITY #7

GOAL: Prevent accidents, increase resident safety, allow for better direction, and to create a sense of security."

PROJECT: ADD STREET LIGHTING

SOLUTION: Install street lights
Conduct study to determine ideal locations
Develop design standards for street lights
Use TIF money
Refer project to Street Lighting District

WHERE: Where study indicates
Homestead Road
Lee Boulevard
Gunnery Road
SR 82
Outlying areas

BLIGHT CRITERIA SATISFIED? Yes
CONSTRUCTION OR PROGRAM PROJECT?
Construction

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:
Lehigh Acres LRPC could liaison with the street lighting special taxing units/districts to address this need. In addition, the street lighting needs of the community could be addressed in the Lehigh Acres master plan.

PRIORITY #8

GOAL: Provide for commercial opportunities and long term economic stability by the development of appropriate zoning and land use relationships."

PROJECT: INCREASE COMMERCIAL ZONING

SOLUTION: Participate with the Lee County Planning Department and Lehigh Corporation in developing a commercial activity center study and sector plan. The LRPC may request comprehensive plan amendments as needed.

WHERE: Where study indicates
Lee Boulevard
Leeland Heights Boulevard
Joel Boulevard

BLIGHT CRITERIA SATISFIED? Yes

CONSTRUCTION OR PROGRAM PROJECT?
Program

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

If a commercial activity study is not available, approach this element as a part of the master plan.

PRIORITY #9

GOAL: Develop a cohesive community image by producing a recognizable graphic and architectural theme."

PROJECT:

ADD AND UPDATE COMMUNITY SIGNS

SOLUTION:

Conduct a study to determine community sign needs
Develop design standards for new signs

WHERE:

Where study indicates
Throughout Lehigh Acres
Main arteries
Entrance to various neighborhoods

BLIGHT CRITERIA SATISFIED? Yes

CONSTRUCTION OR PROGRAM PROJECT?

Construction

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Develop design standards and criteria as a part of the Lehigh Acres master plan.

Section 3.5
THE REDEVELOPMENT FOCUS

As part of the planning process, the community identified issues which are a priority to the residents of Lehigh Acres. These include pedestrian, recreational, traffic, beautification, economic development and land use issues. Every topic identified is addressed in the plan concept for the core area of Lehigh Acres where the majority of the community's residents reside.

The concept consists of a central retail spine with gateway anchors at each end of the business district. Framing the retail spine are two outer triangular parcels which could be planned as mixed use multi-family housing, retail/office developments. Fronting both of these outer parcels are canals which could be reinforced as feature waterfront landscapes providing an incentive for future real estate development.

The surrounding residential community is interconnected to the center with improved vehicular and pedestrian linkages. New entry roadways and canal pedestrian paths finger-in toward the center creating flexible opportunities for residents to reach the core area on foot or by car for shopping, work or recreation.

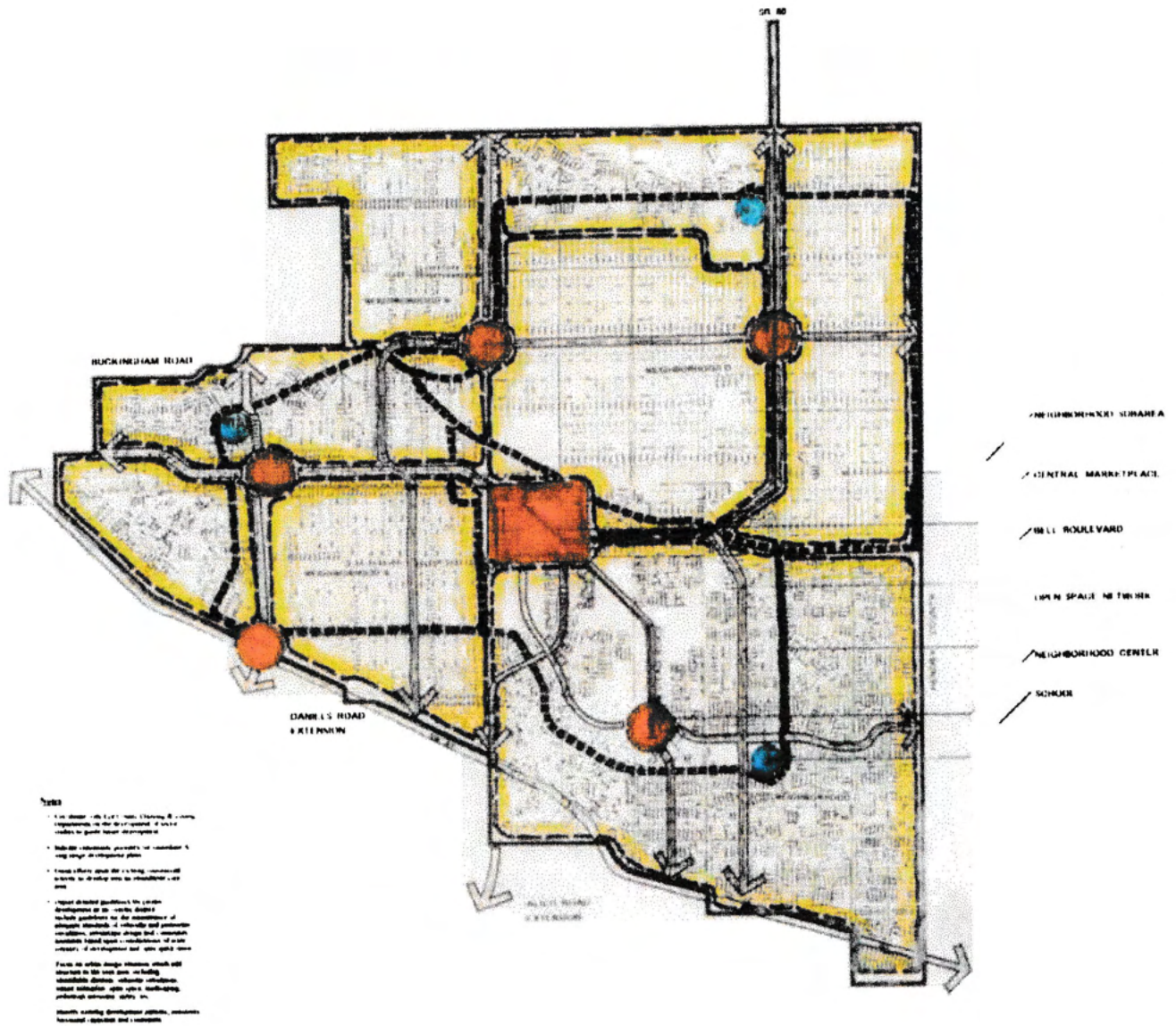
The core area is linked to the outer edges of the community by Lee Boulevard which is geographically separate from the core area and should be addressed separately. Pressure from strip commercial development

along Lee Boulevard threatens to undermine the urban fabric and economic development potential of the community.

This pattern of land use development negatively impacts residents' ways of life by creating traffic problems which affect every activity each person initiates. Lee Boulevard is viewed by residents as the "Main Street" and gateway of Lehigh Acres. It is proposed that the boulevard be treated as such with consideration given to discouraging strip commercial development and promoting a landscape which can enhance the image of Lehigh Acres.

A similar boulevard nearby is McGregor Boulevard and the imagery it gave to the City of Fort Myers.

The Central Canal is also a linkage to the edges of the community. Secondary canal paths lead residents to what can become the backyard of Lehigh Acres. Bicycle paths, picnic areas, canoe facilities, jogging and nature interpretive paths can enliven this waterfront amenity. Programming activities such as art fairs, summer concerts and Fourth of July fireworks displays can bring the entire community together to share and enjoy their civic space.



Key

- Yellow shaded areas - General development areas
- Orange shaded areas - Neighborhood centers
- Blue shaded areas - Schools
- Dashed lines - Open space network
- Solid lines - Major roads
- Thin solid lines - Minor roads
- Thick solid lines - Major roads
- Thin solid lines - Minor roads
- Dotted lines - Utility lines
- Dashed lines - Open space network
- Solid lines - Major roads
- Thin solid lines - Minor roads
- Thick solid lines - Major roads
- Thin solid lines - Minor roads
- Dotted lines - Utility lines

AREA WIDE PLAN

Exhibit 8

LEE COUNTY COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

**LEHIGH ACRES
REDEVELOPMENT**

SHEET	1/2	NORTH	SCALE: 1" = 1/4"	DATE: 12/1984
				REVISION: 11/19/84

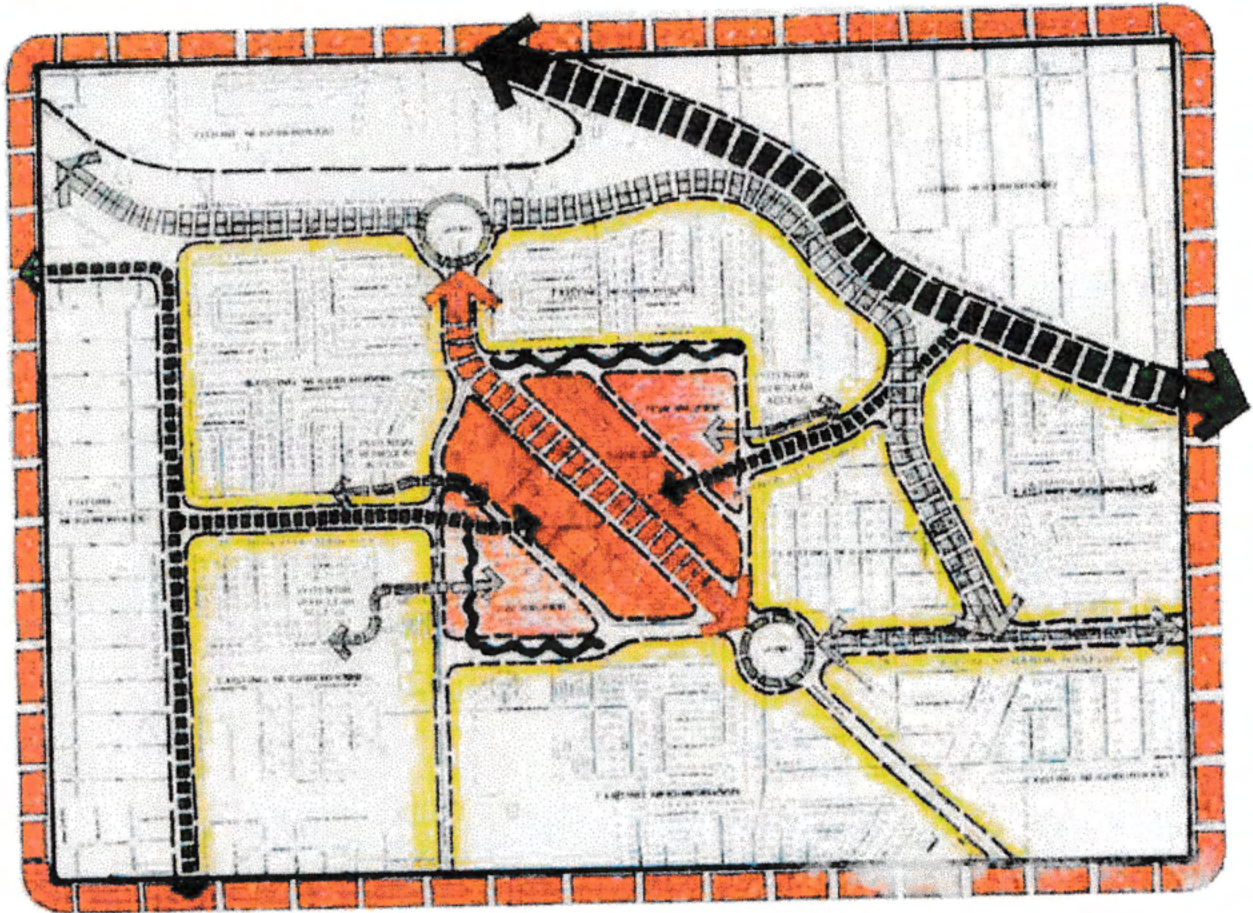


Exhibit 9

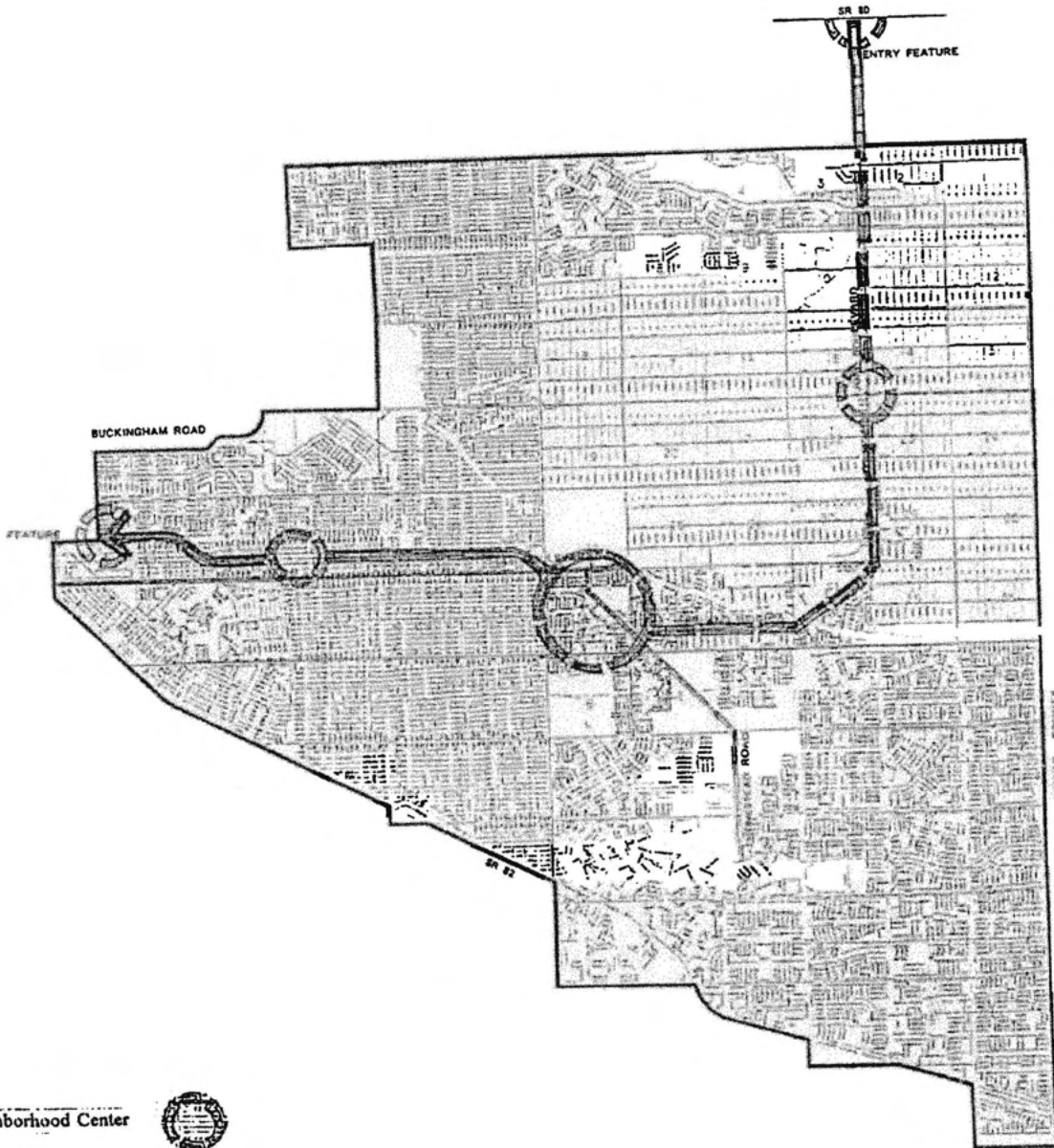
CORE AREA PLAN

LEE COUNTY COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

**LEHIGH ACRES
REDEVELOPMENT**

48a

SHEET	DATE 01/09/04	REVISION	NORTH	SCALE 1" = 10'



Neighborhood Center



Central Core



ORIENTATION/SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Exhibit 10

LEE COUNTY COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

LEHIGH ACRES
REDEVELOPMENT

49

SHEET 0	1/2	1	2	NORTH	DATE 01/20/84
					REVISION:

Section 3.6
FUNDING PLAN

The following table indicates community identified projects, project cost estimates, project locations, and other possible funding sources for Phase I redevelopment activities.

It is the desire of the Lehigh Acres community to have the same projects that are listed in Phase I also included in Phase II, Phase III, and Phase IV. The latter phases will connect to the redevelopment of the remaining neighborhood centers.

Undoubtedly, there will be additional projects generated in latter phases as a result of future market demands and master plan recommendations.

Because master plan recommendations are not available for later redevelopment projects, cost projections were not performed for Phase II, III, and IV projects. At this point, specific cost projections are not predictable.

**TABLE 8
FUNDING PLAN**

PHASE I: 1-5 YEARS

PROGRAM/PROJECT

TIF

OTHER POSSIBLE
FUNDING SOURCES

Master Plan

\$100,000

Sidewalk/Bikeway Construction

\$405,000

Core Area
Commercial Boulevard

Estimated at 5.5 miles of sidewalk or bikeway for core area and Neighborhood Center A. Actual cost to be considered after master plan recommendations.

CIP
Private sector

Lehigh Acres LRPC
Neighborhood Watch
Lee County Safe Neighborhood Plan

Community Contributions
Sheriff's Office

Bus Shelter Construction

\$80,000

Core Area
Commercial Boulevard
Neighborhood Center A

Estimated at \$10,000 for 8 units. Actual cost to be determined after master plan recommendations

Lee Tran
Private sector

TABLE 8 continued

<u>PROGRAM/PROJECT</u>	<u>TIF</u>	<u>OTHER POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES</u>
Lehigh Acres LRPC Interaction with Local Clubs to Contribute to ROW improvements	Estimated at \$25,000 Specific amount to be determined after master plan.	Community Contributions CIP Private Sector
Right of Way Beautification Core Area	Estimated at \$25,000 Specific amount to be determined after master plan.	Street Lighting District Private Sector
Street Light Improvements Core area Commercial Boulevard Neighborhood Center A	\$75,000 Core area lighting Total cost to be determined after master plan.	Street Lighting District Private Sector
Lehigh Acres LRPC Commercial zoning Comp. Plan amendments as needed.	\$75,000	Lehigh Corporation Private Sector
Construct & Install Community Signs Core area Commercial Boulevard Neighborhood Center A	\$40,000 Est. cost @ \$10,000 per unit. Total cost to be determined after master plan.	CIP Private Sector
TOTAL (PHASE I)	\$725,000	

Section 3. 7
FUNDING ALTERNATIVES

There are a variety of revenue sources to consider in financing the cost of redevelopment in Lehigh Acres. It is the sincere desire of the Lehigh Acres community to involve private as well as public resources in the funding of redevelopment projects.

Possible funding alternatives are listed below.

Tax Increment Financing

A trust fund has been established by Lee County, and revenues from increases in Lehigh Acres taxable assessed value are scheduled for deposit in a separate account for Lehigh Acres redevelopment purposes. The assessed value of the Lehigh Acres redevelopment area is capped, and a base year is established. Property tax is collected on the entire amount of assessed value, and any increment over the base year is deposited in the Lehigh Acres account and can be used to implement the Redevelopment Plan.

According to Florida Statute 163.387(6), funds (TIF) in the redevelopment trust fund can be used for the following purposes:

- *Administrative and overhead expenses.
- *Expenses of redevelopment planning, surveys, and

financial analysis, including the reimbursement of such expenses incurred before the redevelopment plan is adopted.

*To acquire property.

*To prepare land for redevelopment, including clearance, relocation of owners and occupants, and the site preparation of redevelopment area property.

*To provide public facilities/utilities.

*To sell property.

*To acquire air rights.

*All expenses connected with agency bonds or notes, or other forms of indebtedness, including payment of principal and interest on CRA loans.

Tax increment revenues cannot be used for:

*Construction of public administrative buildings unless agreed to by each affected taxing authority.

*Public utilities not necessary to carry out the community redevelopment plan if such capital improvement projects are normally financed through user fees or if the projects

would be done within three years of the approval of the community redevelopment plan pursuant to a preexisting capital improvement plan.

*Government operating expenses unrelated to planning and carrying out community redevelopment plans.

Revenue Bonds

Under Florida Statute 163.385(1), a county, municipality, or community redevelopment agency may issue redevelopment revenue bonds from time to time to finance the undertaking of any community redevelopment efforts listed under FS 163.

At this time, the Lee County Board of County Commissioners has not issued revenue bonds or approved borrowing to finance redevelopment pursuant to F.S. 163.

Private and Corporate Donations

Donations are encouraged and will be pursued during the Lehigh Acres redevelopment process. Contributions will be sought to fund such community improvements as bus shelters, landscaping, and community signs.

Grants

Grants will be pursued by the CRA staff and Lehigh Acres LRPC to offset the cost of redevelopment. Typical grants may include Community Development Block

Grants, Florida DOT Highway Beautification Grants, and Safe Neighborhood Grants, among others.

Capital Improvement Projects

Current and future Capital Improvement Projects are planned for the Lehigh Acres redevelopment area. These projects are scheduled for fiscal year 1993 + and are programmed for construction or improvements:

- * 4 lane SR884
- * 4 lane Leeland Heights Boulevard
- * Lehigh Acres Community Park Northeast
- * Lehigh Acres Community Park South
- * East County Regional Library
- * Lehigh Acres Community Recreation Center

Section 3.8
PROJECTED TIF REVENUES

The following estimates of TIF revenues for the Lehigh Acres Redevelopment Area are listed in Table 9.

The estimate projects a frozen tax base of \$665,704,960, with a 3% increase in taxable value from year 1994 to 2024. This estimate is lower than the total tax base because it does not include publicly owned properties and is reduced by individual homestead exemptions.

These projections are speculative estimates. The actual TIF revenues received for the area are dependent on a variety of factors.

Section 3.9
PROJECT COMPLETION SCHEDULE

Phases for Redevelopment

For the purpose of this redevelopment plan, community improvements will occur in 4 phases: Phase I: (1-5) years, Phase II: (6-10) years, Phase III: (11-20) years, Phase IV: (21-30) years.

The projects identified during these phases are estimates of implementation based upon current market projections.

The phasing of these projects allows for flexibility of development in all phases as market demand evolves.

Phase I (1-5 years):

Phase I development is concentrated on the core area, commercial boulevard, and neighborhood center A (Gunnery Road area). Potential projects for this phase include:

Master plan
Sidewalk/bikeway construction
Bus shelter construction
Gunnery road improvements
Right of way beautification
Street lighting
Community signs

Phases II, III, and IV:

Project development in Phase II, III, and IV will occur in neighborhood centers B, C, D, and E. The exact phasing of the remaining neighborhood centers is unknown at this time, and dependent on future market characteristics and master plan recommendations.

In addition, the Lehigh Acres community has indicated that the potential projects for the remaining neighborhood centers will resemble the projects listed in Phase I. Undoubtedly, there will be more projects and concerns as the community develops and the master plan is in place.

TABLE 9

LEHIGH ACRES
10 YEAR PROJECTION
3% INCREASE IN PROPERTY VALUES

YEAR	PRELIMINARY TAXABLE VALUE	BASE TAX YEAR	INCREMENT ABOVE BASE TAX YEAR	GENERAL FUND MILLAGE	ANNUAL TAX INCREMENT REVENUE	CUMULATIVE TAX INCREMENT REVENUE
1993	\$702,537,970	\$702,537,970	\$0.	5.8874	\$0.00	\$0.00
1994	\$723,614,109	\$702,537,970	\$21,076,139	5.8874	\$117,879	\$117,879
1995	\$745,322,532	\$702,537,970	\$42,784,562	5.8874	\$239,295	\$357,174
1996	\$767,682,208	\$702,537,970	\$65,144,238	5.8874	\$364,354	\$721,528
1997	\$790,712,675	\$702,537,970	\$88,174,705	5.8874	\$493,164	\$1,214,692
1998	\$814,434,055	\$702,537,970	\$111,896,085	5.8874	\$625,838	\$1,840,530
1999	\$838,867,076	\$702,537,970	\$136,329,106	5.8874	\$762,493	\$2,603,023
2000	\$864,033,089	\$702,537,970	\$161,495,119	5.8874	\$903,247	\$3,506,270
2001	\$889,954,081	\$702,537,970	\$187,416,111	5.8874	\$1,048,224	\$4,554,494
2002	\$916,652,704	\$702,537,970	\$214,114,734	5.8874	\$1,197,550	\$5,752,044
2003	\$944,152,285	\$702,537,970	\$241,614,315	5.8874	\$1,351,356	\$7,103,400

FOOTNOTES

1. Tax increment is based on the 1993 preliminary tax rolls. The millage rate is based on the 1993 General Revenue rate of 4.6850, the Capital Outlay rate of .5320, and the Unincorporated MSTU rate of .6704.
2. 1993 Base Year - This figure assumes the redevelopment plan is adopted by June 1994 and utilizes the 1993 preliminary tax rolls for the base amount.
3. Annual Tax Increment is 95% of the total Tax Increment Revenue.
4. This analysis is based on the redevelopment boundary illustrated in Exhibit 2 of this document.
5. Projections - A 3% increase in property values has been applied to 1994 through 2003

Source: Lee County Community Redevelopment Agency; February, 1994
Lee County property Tax Appraiser's Office

Because of the necessity for the estimation of TIF dollars and expenditures, the phasing within the Lehigh Acres Community Plan is also an estimate. It is the intention of the Lee County Community Redevelopment Agency and the Lehigh Acres LRPC to develop the programs and projects within the time parameters established in the Lehigh Acres Community Plan to the best of their ability.

Section 3.10
NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACT STATEMENT FOR
LOW TO MODERATE INCOME HOUSING

The Community Redevelopment Plan for Lehigh Acres should not adversely affect the residential component of the redevelopment area. The potential impacts of; relocation, traffic circulation, environmental quality, neighborhood preservation, school population, and public facilities are addressed below.

Relocation: No relocation is anticipated as a result of the redevelopment plan's projects and programs.

Traffic Circulation: Will not be adversely affected by redevelopment activities.

Environmental Quality: No projects are planned that will interfere with the environment. The streetscaping and landscaping will aid in the betterment of the local environment.

Neighborhood Preservation: The forthcoming Master Plan

will be community driven and incorporate neighborhood elements that are indicated by the community.

School Population: Redevelopment activities would not trigger an area wide increase (other than already anticipated infill), but would increase cohesiveness of neighborhood access to schools and public facilities.

Public Facilities: The current public facilities are adequate for programs and projects defined by the plan.

APPENDIX
THE LEHIGH ACRES BLIGHT STUDY

The redevelopment guidelines set forth in this text address the "blight conditions" discussed in the Lehigh Acres Blight Study.

In order for an area to be considered "blighted" {Section 163.340(8), Florida Statutes}, certain characteristics must exist and are illustrated in the Lehigh Acres Blight Study:

Predominance of Defective or Inadequate Street Layout

Faulty Lot Layout in Relation to Size, Adequacy, Accessibility, or Usefulness

Unsanitary or Unsafe Conditions

Deterioration of Site or Other Improvements

Diversity of Ownership or Defective or Unusual Conditions of Title Which prevent the Free Alienability of Land Within the Deteriorated or Hazardous Area

This Redevelopment Plan will address these specific characteristics and offers a program to reduce and/or eliminate blight.

LEE COUNTY COMMUNITY
REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
BLIGHT STUDY

LEHIGH ACRES, FLORIDA

REDEVELOPMENT AREA DESCRIPTION

Lehigh Acres comprises a community of approximately 30,000 people in east central Lee County adjacent to the Hendry County line. The 60,000+ acre community offers living to suit almost any lifestyle, including single family homes, condominiums, townhouses, and golf course villas.

Natural water amenities include the Caloosahatchee River to the north, lakes, ponds, and 175 miles of canals. Other recreational opportunities include: freshwater fishing, swimming, golf, biking, and tennis.

Health care facilities are present, as well as three (soon to be four) fully accredited public schools. Also existing are: increasing retail shopping opportunities, a commerce park, numerous financial institutions, and a multitude of religious congregations. Emergency medical service, fire protection, and law enforcement are also provided.

There are approximately 150 active citizen groups in Lehigh Acres with a variety of community interests.

Concerns identified by the community in the preparation of the Blight Study focused on community beautification, sidewalks, bikeways, police protection, abandoned lot maintenance, major road improvements, pedestrian circulation, public facility improvements, and a host of other concerns. Funding for these concerns is a high priority for Lehigh Acres.

PURPOSE FOR STUDY

Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, sets forth the framework for the establishment and activities of a community redevelopment agency and defines conditions of blight. If, after detailed study, a community is found to be blighted, the appropriate local government (in this case - the Lee County Board of County Commissioners) can declare a it to be a redevelopment area.

The purpose for the blight study is to present and analyze those findings to determine if Lehigh Acres should be designated as a redevelopment area.

On December 15, 1993, the blight study was reviewed by the Lee County Board of County Commissioners, and at that time they adopted a resolution declaring Lehigh Acres to be a redevelopment area.

FINDINGS OF BLIGHT CONDITIONS (DEFINITION)

Blighted Area [as defined in Section 163.340(8), Florida Statutes] can include one or all of the following characteristics:

- (a) An area in which there is a substantial number of slum, deteriorated, or deteriorating structures and conditions which endanger life or property by fire or other causes or one or more of the following factors which substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of a county or municipality and is a menace to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use:
 - 1. Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout.
 - 2. Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness.
 - 3. Unsanitary or unsafe conditions.
 - 4. Deterioration of site or other improvements.
 - 5. Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land.
 - 6. Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title which prevent the free alienability of land within the deteriorated or hazardous area.

- (b) An area in which there exists faulty or inadequate street layout; inadequate parking facilities; or roadways, bridges, or public or public transportation facilities incapable of handling the volume of traffic flow into or through the area, either at present or following proposed construction.

Housing Affordability [as defined in Section 163.355(8)] means:

An area in which there is a shortage of housing affordable to residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly.

The following pages address specific conditions within Lehigh Acres and how these conditions relate to the above blight criteria.

FINDINGS OF BLIGHT CONDITIONS: LEHIGH ACRES

BLIGHT CRITERIA #1: PREDOMINANCE OF DEFECTIVE OR INADEQUATE STREET LAYOUT

The Lehigh Acres study area is characterized by a defective or inadequate street layout. These problems include inadequate layout or design, faulty intersection design, parking problems, and a lack of sidewalks.

Leeland Heights Boulevard (Lee Boulevard to Richmond Avenue)

The existing level of service is F. Road improvements to this segment are necessary to meet the adopted level of E.

The intersection at Lee Boulevard and Leeland Heights Boulevard is inadequate to handle the volume of traffic currently using this intersection. Design problems are

also present.

Sidewalks and bikeways are absent in this road segment.

* Leeland Heights Boulevard (Richmond Avenue to Joel Boulevard):

The existing level of service is F. Road improvements to this segment are necessary to meet the adopted 1994 level of E.

The intersection at Leeland Heights Boulevard and Richmond Avenue is inadequate to handle the volume of traffic currently using this intersection. Design problems are also present.

Sidewalks and bikeways are absent in this road segment.

Lee Boulevard, Leeland Heights Boulevard, Joel Boulevard, Gunnery Road, Sunshine Boulevard, Beth Stacey Boulevard, Alabama Road, Homestead Road, Alexander Graham Bell Boulevard, and Milwaukee Boulevard:

The three signalized intersections located along Homestead Road are inadequate to handle the volume of traffic currently using these intersections. Design problems are also present.

The signalized intersection at Lee Boulevard and Homestead Road is inadequate to handle the volume of

traffic currently using this intersection. Design problems are also present.

While the above connectors and arterials are characterized by pedestrian and bicycle activity, sidewalks and bike routes are absent, or when present, discontinuous and in need of repair.

The area is also characterized by a lack of adequate parking areas, both on and off street. Businesses are hampered by substandard lot sizes which inhibit the provision of adequate on-site parking as well as circulation and access.

BLIGHT CRITERIA #2: FAULTY LOT LAYOUT IN RELATION TO SIZE, ADEQUACY, ACCESSIBILITY, OR USEFULNESS

Much of Lehigh Acres was platted and built prior to the adoption of modern zoning codes. A considerable number of properties are non-conforming to existing codes with regard to setback, parking, lot dimensions, lot coverage, buffer requirements, and open space requirements.

BLIGHT CRITERIA #3: UNSANITARY OR UNSAFE CONDITIONS

Unsafe conditions exist. The unsafe conditions are characterized by inadequate street lighting, dangerous road design, lack of pedestrian crosswalks, absence of road

shoulders, and inadequate plumbing facilities.

* The following collectors and arterials lack adequate street lighting:

Lee Boulevard
Leeland Heights Boulevard
Joel Boulevard
Gunnery Road
Sunshine Boulevard
Beth Stacey Boulevard
Alabama Road
Homestead Road
Alexander Graham Bell Boulevard
SR82

* The following collector has a dangerous road design (difficult geometry):
Homestead Road

The following collectors and arterials lack adequate pedestrian crossings:

Lee Boulevard
Leeland Heights Boulevard
Joel Boulevard
Gunnery Road
Sunshine Boulevard
Beth Stacey Boulevard
Alabama Road
Homestead Road
Alexander Graham Bell Boulevard

The following collectors and arteries lack adequate formalized or soft road shoulders:

Lee Boulevard
Leeland Heights Boulevard
Joel Boulevard
Gunnery Road
Sunshine Boulevard
Beth Stacey Boulevard
Alabama Road
Homestead Road
Alexander Graham Bell Boulevard

- * According to 1990 Census Data, .35% of Lehigh Acre's households lack complete plumbing for indoor use. In the entire county, this figure is .25%.
- * According to 1990 Census Data, 42.2% of Lehigh Acre's households are without water from a public utility. In the entire county, this figure is 12.7%.
- * According to 1990 Census Data, 54.8% of Lehigh Acre's households are without sewage disposal from a public utility. In the entire county, this figure is 30.0%.

The Lehigh Acres community has raised concerns about crime. During 1992, Lehigh Acres had 845 reported major crimes, including 208 burglaries, 286 incidents of theft, 26 assaults/battery, and 3 murders.

BLIGHT CRITERIA #4: DETERIORATION OF SITE OR OTHER IMPROVEMENTS

Surface water management problems are present in the area. Flash flooding is present throughout the community, indicating inadequate stormwater collection and retention systems.

BLIGHT CRITERIA #5: TAX OR SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DELINQUENCY EXCEEDING THE FAIR VALUE OF THE LAND

- * Data is presently unavailable for this topic.

**BLIGHT CRITERIA #6: DIVERSITY OF OWNERSHIP
OR DEFECTIVE OR UNUSUAL CONDITIONS OF
TITLE WHICH PREVENT THE FREE ALIENABILITY
OF LAND WITHIN THE DETERIORATED OR
HAZARDOUS AREA**

It is estimated that there exists approximately 135,000 parcels in Lehigh Acres with roughly 125,000 different titles. Many of these property owners reside in various locations throughout the United States as well as many foreign countries. Communication in regard to property matters is extremely difficult.

**HOUSING AFFORDABILITY [AS DEFINED IN
SECTION 163.355(8)]**

* Data is presently unavailable for this topic.

CONCLUSIONS OF FINDINGS OF BLIGHT

Lehigh Acre clearly has a predominance of defective or inadequate street layout; faulty lot layout; unsafe and unsanitary conditions; and, deterioration of site or other improvements as set forth in Chapter 163 for designation as a blighted area and that rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment, or a combination thereof, of Lehigh Acres is necessary and advisable in the furtherance of the public interest.

LEHIGH ACRES REDEVELOPMENT AREA DEMOGRAPHICS

CHARACTERISTIC	LEE COUNTY	LEHIGH ACRES
Total Persons	335,113	22,205
(%)	100%	6.6%
65 and Over	83,003	6607
(%)	25.0%	29.7%
Median Age	42.0	37.8
Persons Per Household	2.35	2.7
Median Household Income	\$28,448	\$29,075
Persons Below Poverty Level	30,267	178
(%)	9.03%	.8%
Year Round Housing Units	189,051	10,559
Median Value of Owner Occupied Housing	\$67,470	\$66,530
Median Monthly Mort. Pymt.	\$688	\$576
Median Gross Rent	\$504	\$519
Units Lacking Complete Plumbing Facilities	486	37
(%)	.25%	.35%
Units Without Water From Public Source	24,019	4463
(%)	12.7%	42.2%
Units Without Sewage Disposal From Public Source	56,785	5788
(%)	30.0%	54.8%
Units Without Heating Source	1095	99
(%)	.57%	.93%

Source: 1990 Census of Population and Housing

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Lee County Division of Planning, U.S. Census Data

Lee County Office of Management and Information Services, Mapping

Lee County Office of Property Appraiser, 1993 Assessed Value Information

Lee County Sheriffs Department, 1992 Crime Statistics

Department of Commerce, U.S. Census

APPENDIX 2
LEHIGH ACRES COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA
DESCRIPTION

Description of Lehigh Acres redevelopment area located in Lee County Florida contain Sections 1, 2, 3, 11,12,13, 14, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35 and 36 of Township 44 South and Range 26 East and Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, and 36 of Township 44 South and Range 27 East and Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, and 13 of Township 45 South and Range 26 East and Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, and 36 of Township 45 South and Range 27 East.

Beginning at the Northwest corner of Section 3, Township 44 South, Range 26 East; thence along the Northern Township line of Township 44 South approximately 34,250 feet; thence North 300 feet West of the Centerline of Joel Boulevard, approximately 7625 feet to the Southern Right of Way of State Road 80; thence East 600 feet along the Right of Way line to a point at the South Right of Way of State Road 80; thence South 7625 feet to the Northern line of Section 12, Township 44 South, Range 27 east; thence East +/-9,000 feet to the line marking the Eastern most boundary of Lee County, Florida in Section 1, Township 44 South, Range 27 East, thence South following said county line approximately 62,000 feet to the Southeast corner of Section 36, Township 45 South, Range 27 East; thence West following South line of Section 36, Township 45 South, Range 27 East approximately 5280 feet to the Southwest corner of Section 36, Township 45 South, Range 27 East; thence North +/- 3960 feet at a point to the Southern Right of Way line of State Road 82; thence Northwest following the Southern Right of Way Line of State Road 82 approximately 5280 feet to a point defining the Southern boundary of Section 27, Township 45 South, Range 27 East; thence West following said Section line approximately 5280 feet to a point defined as the Southwest corner of Section 27, Township 45 South, Range 27 East; thence North following the West Section line of Section 27, Township 45 South, Range 27 East for approximately 1320 feet to the Southern Right of Way line of State Road 82; thence following the South Right of Way of State Road 82 in a Northwest direction for approximately 7920 feet to a point +/- 320 feet West of the Southwest corner of Section 20, Township 45 South, Range 27 east; thence West 7920 feet along the South boundary of Section 20 and 19, Township 45 South, Range 27 East to a point at the Southwest corner of Section 19, Township 45 South, Range 27 East; thence North along said Section line 6600 feet to a point at the South Right of Way boundary of State Road 82; thence following said Right of Way Northwest 8184 feet to the Southern line of Section 11, Township 45 South, Range 26 East; thence West following the South Section line

of Section 11, Township 45 South, Range 26 East approximately 2640 feet to the Southwest corner of Section 11, Township 45 South, Range 26 East; thence North along said West Section line approximately 1320 feet to the South Right of Way line of State Road 82 following Northwest along said Right of Way line of State Road 82 approximately 27,760 feet to a point 600 feet South of the Southwest boundary line of Section 30, Township 44 South, Range 26 East; thence along said Section line 600 feet to a point at the Southwest corner of Section 30, Township 44 South, Range 26 east; thence North along said Section line 2640 feet to a point defined as the South Right of Way of lee Boulevard; thence West 2640 feet along the South right of Way of Lee Boulevard to a point at the West Right of Way line of Alva Boulevard; thence North following the West Right of Way of Alva Boulevard approximately 5280 feet to the South Right of Way of Buckingham County Road approximately 11,880 feet to a point defined as the South boundary line of Section 16, Township 44 South, Range 26 East; thence following said Section line of 16 and 15 East approximately 6600 feet to a point defined as the Southwest corner of Section 15, Township 44 South, Range 26 East; thence North following the West Section line of Section 14 and 11 of Township 44 South, Range 26 East approximately 10,560 feet to a point at the Southeast boundary of Section 3, Township 44 South, Range 26 east; thence West along said Section line 5280 feet; thence North following West Section line of Section 3, Township 44 South, Range 26 east approximately 5280 feet to the point of beginning.