Section 3

Public Involvement Process

SECTION 3.1: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT OVERVIEW

The MMP was developed using a completely transparent public involvement process, unprecedented in any previous planning effort in Collier County. In addition to an extensive schedule of public meetings, workshops, and interviews at critical points during development of the MMP, all project team meetings were open to the public. All documents, narratives, and graphics produced were posted to the MMP website in draft form and made available to the public for review and comment.

Meeting and workshop materials, summaries, etc., developed as part of the public involvement process of the MMP, are included in Appendix A.

Public Involvement Process

At the onset of Phase Two of the MMP, a detailed public involvement process was developed to allow key stakeholder agencies and the public opportunities to help shape development of the plan. This process, documented in the Public Involvement Plan (PIP), identified public involvement activities based on the specific needs of the project as understood at that time. However, as this project developed, the public involvement process evolved, and the PIP was modified in response. As an example of the evolution of the MMP public involvement process, the initial PIP identified a separate set of stakeholder and public meetings. Fairly early in the project, it was apparent that one group of public stakeholder meetings would maximize participation and avoid duplication of meeting content. Therefore, the stakeholder and public meetings were combined.

In conjunction with a commitment to transparency, efforts were made to provide a broad-spectrum of information and opportunities for input to meet the needs of the county's diverse population. Techniques to obtain public input included meetings/workshops, stakeholder interviews, a project website, newsletters, and press, among other methods, and will be discussed in more detail later in this section.

As documented in the PIP, objectives of the MMP public involvement process were to:

- Maximize transparency in all phases on the MMP process
- Provide a broad-spectrum of information and opportunities for input to meet the needs of the county's diverse population
- Provide the opportunity to gather input from the "silent majority"
- Build consensus among stakeholders to facilitate the development of signed MOUs at the end of the project
- Obtain and use stakeholder and public input to guide and shape the development of the MMP

Public Involvement Timeline

The timeline of public involvement activities for the MMP discussed in this section is provided in Figure 3-1.
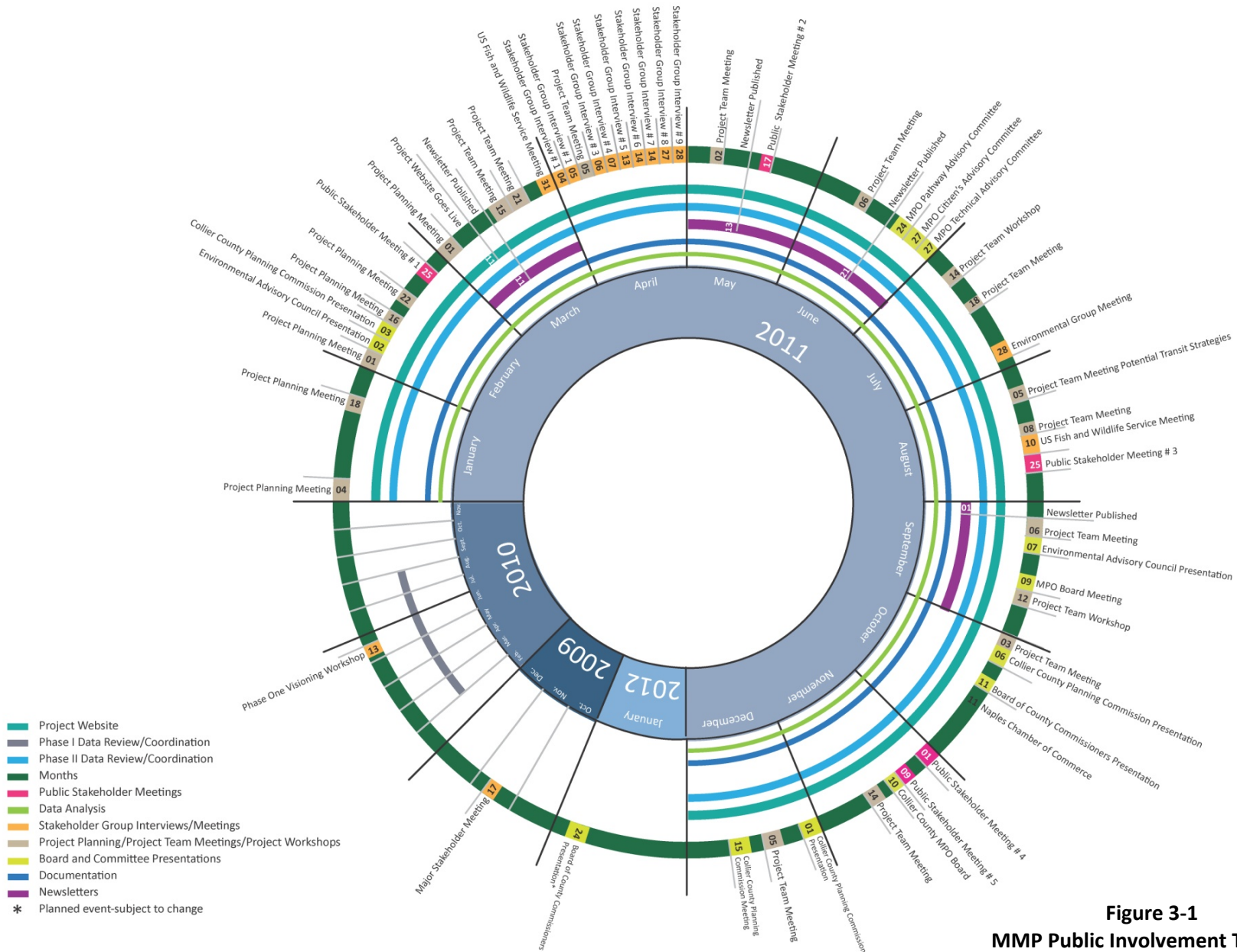
Figure 3-1
MMP Public Involvement Timeline
(through Phase Two)

Legend:
- Project Website
- Phase I Data Review/Coordination
- Phase II Data Review/Coordination
- Months
- Public Stakeholder Meetings
- Data Analysis
- Stakeholder Group Interviews/Meetings
- Project Planning/Project Team Meetings/Project Workshops
- Board and Committee Presentations
- Documentation
- Newsletters
- * Planned event-subject to change

2009 · 2010 · 2011 · 2012

January · February · March · April · May · June · July · August · September · October · November · December

Phase One Visioning Workshop 13
Major Stakeholder Meeting 17
Board of County Commissioners Presentation* 24
Collier County Planning Commission Meeting 15
Project Team Meeting 05
Collier County Planning Commission Presentation 01
Project Team Meeting 14
Collier County MPO Board 10
Public Stakeholder Meeting # 5 09
Public Stakeholder Meeting # 4 01
Naples Chamber of Commerce Presentation 11
Board of County Commissioners Presentation 11
Collier County Planning Commission Presentation 06
Project Team Meeting 03
Project Team Workshop 12
MPO Board Meeting 09
Environmental Advisory Council Presentation 07
Project Team Meeting 06
Newsletter Published 01
Public Stakeholder Meeting # 3 25
US Fish and Wildlife Service Meeting 10
Project Team Meeting 08
Project Team Meeting Potential Transit Strategies 05
Environmental Group Meeting 28
Project Team Meeting 18
Project Team Workshop 14
MPO Technical Advisory Committee 27
MPO Citizen's Advisory Committee 27
MPO Pathway Advisory Committee 24
Newsletter Published 06
Project Team Meeting 05
Public Stakeholder Meeting # 2 17
Newsletter Published
Project Team Meeting 02
Stakeholder Group Interview # 9 28
Stakeholder Group Interview # 8 27
Stakeholder Group Interview # 7 14
Stakeholder Group Interview # 5 13
Stakeholder Group Interview # 4 07
Stakeholder Group Interview # 3 06
Project Team Meeting 05
Stakeholder Group Interview # 1 04
US Fish and Wildlife Service Meeting 31
Stakeholder Group Interview # 6 21
Project Team Meeting 15
Newsletter Published
Project Website Goes Live
Project Planning Meeting 01
Public Stakeholder Meeting # 1 25
Project Planning Meeting 22
Collier County Planning Commission Presentation 16
Project Planning Meeting 03
Environmental Advisory Council Presentation 02
Project Planning Meeting 01
Project Planning Meeting 18
Project Planning Meeting 04

SECTION 3.2: MASTER MOBILITY PLAN STAKEHOLDERS

During Phase One of the MMP, a stakeholder database was developed identifying representatives from the following types of organizations:

- Local, state, and federal departments and agencies
- Special interest groups, including civic, political, and veteran organizations and non-governmental environmental organizations
- Members of the private sector, including land owners and other affected parties
- Professional and business groups
- Redevelopment agencies
- Public and private educational facilities
- Tribes
- Utility providers
- Members of the media
- Interested members of the general public

In May 2010, stakeholders, along with the public, were invited to a presentation co-sponsored by Collier County and the Southwest Florida District Council of the Urban Land Institute (ULI). The purpose of this presentation was to "kick off" the MMP and introduce the project to this group of stakeholders and the public.

At the onset of Phase Two, the list of stakeholders was refined to identify key points of contact from each interested agency or organization. Interested parties also could become part of the MMP stakeholder contact database throughout the process, either via the MMP website, by contacting the project team, or by signing up on the contact list at any of the public stakeholder meetings.

SECTION 3.3: PUBLIC INFORMATION TECHNIQUES

A diverse set of public involvement and information techniques was used to meet the objectives outlined in the MMP PIP and to keep stakeholders and the public informed of the project development, as well as upcoming opportunities for public input.

Public information techniques used throughout the MMP process include the following:

MMP Website – The website specifically developed for this project provides all pertinent information in one location. The project website was launched on March 11, 2011. At this site, users are able to sign up for electronic project notifications and newsletters, participate in surveys, and comment on any project document, provide general comments, and access all outside links and resources.

The MMP website address is www.colliergov.net/mastermobiltyplan.

A link to the project website also was made available directly on the Collier County homepage.

Project Logo – A specific logo was developed for the MMP and is used on all project documents, images, and presentations to clearly identify association with the project.

Project Newsletters – Six newsletters were released at strategic points throughout the development of the MMP, as shown in Figure 3-1. The newsletters were one method of continuously informing stakeholders and the public by providing highlights of the public involvement activities and directing interested parties to the project website.

The MMP website included a function for users to provide an email address to receive newsletters and other MMP correspondence electronically.

Email Blasts –Individuals who received the MMP newsletters electronically also received other MMP-related correspondence through email blast campaigns. Email blasts were sent to inform/remind stakeholders, public policy makers, and other individuals of upcoming meetings and other events, disseminate the newsletters, and notify individuals that important information was available on the project website.

Press – Articles in local press and on websites, as well as meeting advertisements, provided additional exposure of the MMP to the public. In addition, an information card was created highlighting key information regarding the MMP and disseminated in various locations throughout the county.

SECTION 3.4: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

This section provides details regarding the various types of public involvement activities conducted throughout the development of the MMP. As previously mentioned, the specific dates in which these activities occurred are provided in Figure 3-1.

Project Team Meetings

Project planning meetings, project team meetings, and project workshops were held at regular intervals throughout the MMP process to allow team members to discuss and coordinate the development of the plan. Project team meetings were typically one to two hours in length, and members of the public in attendance were invited to share input and ask questions. In several instances, the public submitted follow-up questions or comments and the project team responded accordingly. Project team meetings held

beginning in April 2011, were recorded and audio of the meetings made available to the public upon request.

Public Stakeholder Meetings

Five public stakeholder meetings were held to elicit feedback from stakeholders and the public on specific concepts, issues, and strategies at various points during development of the MMP. Materials and detailed summaries from each public stakeholder meeting are provided in Appendix A.

Public Stakeholder Meeting #1 was held on February 25, 2011, at the Collier County South Regional Library. Approximately 40 individuals attended this event. The goal of this meeting was to provide an overview of the project and gather initial input to help guide the data analysis effort. Attendees were divided into discussion groups to "brainstorm" a list of issues they believed were important to the process and should be addressed during the development of the MMP. Input received during this meeting was organized into the following topics and subsequently used to help develop the concepts, strategies, and tools to reduce VMT to be ranked during the exercise completed for the May 17, 2011, public stakeholder meeting:

- Land Use (large-scale versus project level issues)
- Mobility (multi-modal infrastructure; access and circulation)
- Infrastructure coordination (conserve money and resources)
- Environment (protection and preservation)
- Demographics
- Economics
- Timing and priority of public investment
- Overall MMP process (timeframe, breadth and transparency of public involvement)

Public Stakeholder Meeting #2 was held on May 17, 2011, at the North Collier Regional Park Exhibit Hall. Approximately 45 individuals attended this event. After an update of project activities was provided, the objective was to review concepts, strategies, and tools to reduce VMT provided by stakeholders and the public. Attendees were divided into discussion groups and were asked to rank potential mobility plan concepts, strategies, and tools from most important to least important, as well as provide additional ideas not yet listed. Major themes stemming from the discussion groups include:

- Use of incentives to promote urban infill and redevelopment
- Mix of land uses and multi-modal connectivity is key to creating compact, walkable, interconnected communities
- Cultivating connected human communities will improve quality of life while also benefiting the natural environment
- Adjusting the level of service on roadways will create more incentive to use alternative modes of transportation
- Protecting natural resources and ecosystems is a priority

Public Stakeholder Meeting #3 was held on August 25, 2011, at the Collier County Golden Gate Community Center. Approximately 50 individuals attended this event. At the beginning of the meeting, a PowerPoint presentation was given that provided a brief introduction for individuals unfamiliar with the project, as well as an update of the project activities since the May 2011 public stakeholder meeting.

One of the key items in the opening presentation was the introduction of several emerging themes for the MMP that were identified through public input and analysis during the first seven months of the project. The presentation of these emerging themes helped to set the stage for the information stations that followed the presentation. The stations were set up so that individuals could visit each station at their own pace. Each station included visual boards with countywide information (environmental map, existing/planned transit, countywide concepts and tools), sub-area information (concepts and tools specific to each sub-area), and other information on land use concepts (e.g., mixed-use, densities, etc.) and complete streets.

Following a visit to each station, participants were asked to complete a survey relating to the countywide and sub-area concepts and tools. The survey also was made available on the project website for those participants unable to attend the meeting or complete the survey while at the meeting.

Major themes that arose from survey respondents for each subarea include:

- Countywide Area – Overall respondents agreed with the options provided to incentive employers to promote the use of alternative modes, for the County to invest more to enhance transit, to co-locate public facilities, to the address connectivity at all levels.
- Coastal Urban Area – All respondents agreed there should be more focus on alternative modes of travel networks, while there were mixed reviews on whether the County should allow congestion on specific roadways to encourage redevelopment. Majority of the comments were focused on the need to connect neighborhoods.
- Immokalee Urban Area – Most respondents agreed there should be a varied development review process to promote infill and agreed transit should play a more critical role in providing mobility in the area. The idea that the County should allow

congestion on some roadways to promote redevelopment garnered mixed reviews.

- Golden Gate Estates/Orange Tree Area – The majority of respondents were in agreement with the options presented in the survey. For instance, options that maximize connectivity should be emphasized in the area, Transfer of Development Rights should be used to reduce densities in targeted areas, and all agreed that transit concepts appropriate to the land use and vision of the community should be considered.
- Rural Land Stewardship Area – Though the survey options received mixed results, the majority of respondents was neutral or agreed with the options. Overall, respondents felt options to maximize connectivity should be emphasized, incentives should be used to maximize densities, and transit concepts should be considered.
- Rural Fringe Receiving Areas – Respondents were overwhelmingly in agreement with the options presented by the survey. All respondents agreed transit concepts should be considered. Most also agreed that options that maximize connectivity be considered, that incentives be developed to promote desired results, and that maximum allowable densities and intensities within the rural villages should be revisited.

Public Stakeholder Meeting #4 was held on November 1, 2011, from 9 AM to 11 AM at the South Regional Library and was attended by 20 participants. **Public Stakeholder Meeting #5** was held on November 9, 2011, from 4 PM to 6 PM at the North Collier Regional Park Exhibit Hall and was attended by seven participants. The purpose of these two meetings was to answer questions on the Draft Report published October 19, 2011, and gather feedback on the draft MMP recommendations. Questions and

comments received during these meetings were reviewed by the Project Team and addressed in this Final Report, as necessary.

Group Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholders who are local officials, have regulatory authority, or that own, control, or manage assets to be considered in the MMP (e.g., infrastructure, utilities, public land, major private property owners, etc.) and who ultimately will be asked to consider signing a Memorandum of Understanding at the end of this project were interviewed by the Project Team during a series of interviews held in April 2011. In addition, environmental and other non-governmental organizations (NGO) historically involved in planning activities in Collier County and expected to be heavily involved in the development of the MMP were also interviewed.

In preparation for the interviews, a questionnaire was mailed to representatives of the stakeholder agencies. The questionnaire requested information from each stakeholder agency as to whether their organization has a strategic or long range plan, specific goals the stakeholder agency has established, and whether their organization has established level of service (LOS) standards, among other pertinent questions. The interviews collected suggestions made by the stakeholders, as well as other comments and concerns pertinent to the MMP.

Thirty-seven individuals were interviewed as part of nine stakeholder group interviews conducted during April 2011:

- Collier County Economic Development Office and Golden Gate Estates Area Civic Association (April 4, 2011)
- Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council, Collier County Land Development Services, and Collier County Metropolitan Planning Organization staff (April 5, 2011)

- Audubon Society, Defenders of Wildlife, Conservancy, Florida Wildlife Foundation, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and Environmental Advisory Council (April 6, 2011)
- Collier County Stormwater and Environmental Services Section, South Florida Water Management District (SWFMD) Big Cypress Basin (BCB) (April 7, 2011)
- Collier County Facilities Management and Administrative Services (April 13, 2011)
- Collier County Housing and Human Services, Library Services, Public Services, and Parks and Recreation departments, and School District Board of Collier County (April 14, 2011)
- Big Corkscrew Island Fire Control and Rescue District and Golden Gate Fire Control and Rescue District (April 14, 2011)
- Barron Collier Companies, Consolidated Citrus/King Ranch Incorporated, Star Development, and Collier Enterprises (April 27, 2011)
- Collier County Metropolitan Planning Organization staff, Collier Area Transit, Collier County Airport Authority, and Florida Department of Transportation District 1 (April 28, 2011)

A summary of the stakeholder interviews is provided in Appendix A.

Public Presentations

In addition to the aforementioned meetings, presentations were made to various County boards at which the public was encouraged to attend; these presentations were advertised on the MMP website, as well as via the appropriate agenda package. The project team presented the MMP to the following boards and committees:

- Collier County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) (2)
- Collier County Planning Commission (CCPC) (3)

- Collier County Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) (2)
- Collier County MPO Board (2)
- Collier County MPO Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) (1)
- Collier County MPO Pathways Advisory Committee (PAC) (1)
- Collier County MPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) (1)

Specific dates of these presentations are provided in Figure 3-1.

SECTION 3.5: MAJOR THEMES AND OUTCOMES

Major themes and outcomes from the MMP public involvement process were documented and considered throughout all stages of plan development. Comments and suggestions received at public stakeholder meetings, stakeholder interviews, project team meetings, public presentations, or via email or phone conversations were documented in a spreadsheet that was continually reviewed by the project team.

Emerging Project Themes

At the beginning of the project, public involvement activities included brainstorming of ideas and concepts from the stakeholders and public. As the MMP progressed, this brainstorming list has been refined through both quantifiable exercises and general discussions with stakeholders and the public. Through this effort, major themes began to emerge. These major themes, which were used to help guide and shape the development of the MMP recommendations, include the following:

Environmental Preservation and Protection
It was clear from the beginning that the MMP must address preservation of Collier County's rich biodiversity and natural resources. Significant efforts have been undertaken by environmental groups, public agencies, and citizens to ensure that environmental concerns and issues are

understood and considered during major planning efforts within the county, including the development of the MMP.

Connectivity

Multi-modal connectivity and walkable communities were often cited through the public involvement process as desirable mechanisms for reducing VMT. Also, evident was that connectivity can mean a lot of different things to different people and, as such, should be addressed and looked at on several levels. While connectivity is a broad and general theme, the fundamental element of connectivity, as related to reducing VMT, is to increase mobility by increasing travel options and efficiency and developing a fully-integrated motorized/non-motorized network.

Geographic connectivity or the connection(s) between areas could be thought of as how one gets from "Point A" to "Point B." One of the main factors dictating the travel mode between points is distance. If someone is traveling across the county or between counties, it would be more unlikely that they would choose to walk or ride a bike. To address the effect that distance has on connectivity, geographic connectivity can be looked at on three levels:

- Regional connectivity – includes both inter- and intra-county travel. Regional connectivity typically consists of major roadways (highways and arterials) and premium transit (i.e., express and commuter service). The goal of regional connectivity should be to effectively and efficiently move people and goods throughout, into, and outside of the county.

- Local connectivity – includes movement within sub-areas of the county. While local connectivity still consists of travel mainly using roads and transit, it includes a more localized component. The roadways traveled tend to include more collector roads and

transit is typically provided by fixed-route, rather than premium service. Also, with shorter distances, non-motorized travel becomes a more viable option, especially bicycle travel using both on- and off-road bike lanes and paths.

- Neighborhood or project-level connectivity – consists of connectivity and circulation within a neighborhood or development project. At this level all modes, motorized and non-motorized, become more attractive.

Land use and infrastructure connectivity refers to the connections between land uses (property to property), land use and infrastructure (property to travel network), and infrastructures (e.g. transit and bicycle facilities). Connectivity between land uses can be achieved through inter-connections/stub-outs between properties and shared access (driveways and parking). Connections between land uses and infrastructure could be as simple as providing pedestrian connections from the street sidewalk to the front of a building or as sophisticated as a transit-oriented development.

On-site connectivity deals with the connections within a development or project. While some larger developments may focus on motorized travel, the main component of on-site connectivity is the provision of pedestrian and bicycle facilities or multi-use paths. Since on-site connectivity typically deals with the beginning and end of trips, any obstacles at this level may lessen the effect of efforts made at the other levels of connectivity.

Incentives

The MMP should encourage an incentive-based program, rather than the use of regulations or restrictions, as the preferred method for influencing desired development and infrastructure type, location, sequence, and mix.

Mixed-Use and Design

A mix of compatible land uses should be allowed, encouraged, and incentivized at densities and intensities appropriate to the scale and nature of the area.

Economics

The economic make-up of the county is an important factor in influencing the longer-term vision. Economic variables such as a diversified and larger employment base, diversified tax base, and mix of housing prices were cited as important considerations for the MMP. The County has identified that infrastructure needs based on current policies and practices result in costs that far exceed available revenue. It is apparent that as the county continues to grow, current infrastructure planning levels within Collier County are unsustainable without significant changes. As such, it is one goal of the MMP to identify policies and recommendations that can allow for efficient and consolidated infrastructure planning, therefore reducing the cost burden.

Tools to Support MMP Themes

Each of the above themes is influenced by land use or infrastructure decisions made by the County. At its core, the County has a specific set of tools at its disposal to effect land use and infrastructure decisions. The recommendations resulting from Phase Two of the MMP have been developed in a manner that will enable the County to apply these tools, as appropriate, during Phase Three of this project.

Land Use

Collier County has three primary tools to help guide and regulate the mix, function, sequence, and location of land use within the county.

- Maps – Regulatory maps, such as the Future Land Use Map, identify the allowable categories of land uses that may be established on each parcel in the county.
- Policy – Measurable policies within the Growth Management Plan support the long-term goals and objectives related to future growth and development within the county.
- Regulations – Land use regulations, such as the LDC, define the process for regulating the size, type, structure, and use of land or building.

Infrastructure

Collier County has three primary factors that impact public infrastructure projects.

- Funding – by what source the infrastructure will be paid for (capital) and how it will be maintained (operating)?
- Location – where the infrastructure will be located?
- Form/Design – how the infrastructure will look and function?

Geographic Application of Tools

As previously discussed in Section 2, it was recognized early in the MMP process that Collier County is not homogenous, but contains six distinct areas, each with unique characteristics. Application of the recommendations developed from this process, derived from the above local government tools, will pertain to one of three geographic areas:

- Countywide
- Sub-Area (one or more)
- Neighborhood/Development Project Level