

# Growth Management

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The former Transportation Services and Community Development and Environmental Services divisions merged officially on June 1, 2010 forming the new Growth Management Division (GMD). The merger was a natural extension of the established working relationship between the operating units and the management teams. CDES planned and regulated development while Transportation Services managed and maintained the stormwater and mobility needs for the county. Together, they worked side by side to “manage growth.”

The merger has improved customer service, streamlined business process and improved fiscal management resulting in an additional \$2.5 million in savings in annual reoccurring operating costs which included a reduction from ten to six departments. Add to that attrition, elimination of vacant funded positions, as well as voluntary retirements and personnel dropped by nearly 200 positions, over one third of the work force that had been employed during peak levels. One prime example of improved customer service is the new GMD Business Center which includes the consolidation of all land use, permitting and licensing functions, which means “one stop shopping” to better serve the customer. Time performance standards were established for development plan reviews that provide a money back guarantee if those standards are not met. To date, not one dollar has been returned.

The Code Enforcement Department’s nationally recognized Blight Prevention Program proactively works to reduce areas of blight within the county. Through a Foreclosure Task Force, staff works with banks and lenders to achieve voluntary compliance rather than enforcement orders to address code violations on foreclosed properties. To date, these initiatives have resulted in banks spending more than \$1.6 million to abate nearly 2000 code violations.

Freedom Park received the Team Project of the Year Award from the Florida Association of County Engineers and Road Superintendents. The 50-acre natural water quality treatment facility, which provides flooding relief and treatment of stormwater runoff from the Gordon River Basin, opened to the public in October 2009.

The two-mile Santa Barbara Boulevard Extension from Davis Boulevard to Rattlesnake Hammock Road was completed on time and within budget. It has six through travel lanes (three lanes northbound and three lanes southbound separated by a median) with on-road bike lanes as well as streetlights and six-foot wide sidewalks on both sides of the roadway. In addition,



a 3,200 foot Lely Area Stormwater Improvement Project (LASIP) canal was built as part of the project. This project was the first to entirely use in-house staff to handle Construction Engineering Inspection to directly oversee the county's contracted construction contractor. The practice is also

being done on the Oil Well Road Widening Project saving the county an estimated \$9 million.

More sections of LASIP were also completed – Lely Manor Canal Phase 1B North and South, both completed on time and within budget. Nine LASIP segments have been completed, three are under construction and ten more are in design. A total of 30 segments are scheduled to be completed by 2015. The project is to improve flood control and the quality of the stormwater runoff in the 11,000 acre Lely area which has been prone to flooding.

Having built over 230 lane miles since 2000 to catch up with infrastructure needs, the focus now shifts to maintaining the assets. The Road Maintenance Department resurfaced 85 lane miles and restriped and added pavement markings to 200 lane miles.

Collier Area Transit (CAT), the county's nine-year-old transit system continues to serve over 1 million riders annually. This year CAT received approval for utilizing the CAT Operations Center on Radio Road for a transfer location and transfers are scheduled to begin in January 2011. In addition, a \$1.3 million grant has been obtained from the Florida Department of Transportation for construction of a permanent transfer facility at the Main Government Complex to replace the temporary shade tents and parking lot space being utilized next to the Collier County Museum. CAT also added 10 new bus shelters along their routes. In September, the BCC awarded a new three-year contract to a new vendor, Tectrans, which is a national provider of transportation management services with more than 30 contracts in Florida and close to 30 years experience.

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