



## Welcome to Charlotte County Economic Development Office Newsletter

Please enjoy your copy of the Charlotte County Economic Development Office Newsletter. If you need any further information, please feel free to contact our office at 941-764-4941 or at [FloridaEDO@charlottefl.com](mailto:FloridaEDO@charlottefl.com).

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**Charlotte County  
New Business Tax  
Receipts**

July - 174

August - 135

September - 140

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

October 3 - ECEC Meeting  
(Call for Information)

October 5 - Parkside Golf

## FloridasInnovationCoast.com

The Charlotte County Economic Development Office Director, Tom Patton, has announced the launch of his department's new web site. The web site was created by Marketing Alliance, Inc., a local (Punta Gorda) marketing firm with an excellent reputation for working with Economic Development organizations across the U.S.

The re-engineering of the web site is a product of the Economic Development Office's new branding effort to attract and grow business in the community. The web site offers something for all businesses, new and existing, and will provide state-of-the-art videos and interactive maps illustrating the locations of airports, seaports, roads, and rail for global companies and site selectors who are looking for new business locations. The web site will have a database of available commercial properties, both vacant and buildings, for sale or lease within the County. Realtors and commercial property owners will be able to log into a database to add their commercial listings along with specific criteria for interested companies and site selectors scouting for new locations.

In addition to its new professional look, the web site will contain information about Charlotte County including area demographics, incentives, educational opportunities, and its ready workforce. For local startup and existing businesses, there is a Business Support section, which provides helpful information and web site links to aid in growing a business. Links to Florida magazines, Economic Development news articles, newsletters and a calendar of events, will allow site visitors to gain a better understanding of Charlotte County with greater ease.

Along with the launch of the new web site, the Economic Development Office will begin its pilot "Certified Site" program for properties located in the Punta Gorda Interstate Airport Park. Certified Sites are properties that have provided specific documentation demonstrating "shovel readiness" and are "ready to go" for development. These properties, once approved by the Economic Development Office, will have a special "Certified Site" designation and a "Certified Site" sign will be placed on the property attracting instant recognition for prospective buyers. Mr. Patton states, "Certified Sites are a key component in

today's site selectors' search, and by having these sites Charlotte County becomes competitive with similar locations throughout the country."

Be sure to stop in for a visit at: [www.FloridasInnovationCoast.com](http://www.FloridasInnovationCoast.com).

## Business Tax Renewal

It's that time of year again to renew your Business License. Business License renewal notices will include a link to a business survey that was prepared by the Entrepreneurial Support Organization. The survey is available online when you pay your tax at <https://www.charlotte.county-taxes.com/public> or you can go directly to the survey site and take the **Business Survey** at a different time.

Survey results will be provided to our Entrepreneurial Support Organization (ESO) organizations (Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce; Florida Works; Goodwill; SBDC; and SCORE) to assist in developing programs to serve the needs of our existing businesses. Please take the time to complete the survey.

## Charlotte Harbor CRA

The Board of County Commissioners approved revisions to the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) Architectural Standards on July 23, 2013. The changes were recommended by the Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee and provide clarification and additional flexibility to the standards that were originally adopted in 1996. The standards require specific design elements, such as metal roofs, verandas and cupolas be included in commercial buildings that will enhance the appearance of the community and be consistent with the "old Florida" vernacular style and promotes the history of Charlotte Harbor. The revised standards are available at

<http://www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov/CRA/CharlotteHarbor/Pages/default.aspx>.

Harbor Walk Project - the Board of County Commissioners approved a contract with Kimley Horn and Associates to finalize the design, permitting and construction plans for Phase IB of the Harbor Walk project on September 24. The Harbor Walk project is located at the foot of the north-bound US411 bridge and is the signature project for the Charlotte Harbor CRA. Once completed it will enhance pedestrian and bicycle access to Charlotte Harbor and help to stimulate private investment in the area. Phase 1A which includes replacement of the seawall, development of a small boat launch, parking area and restroom is designed and permitted. Funding for Phase IA is included in Florida Department of Transportation work plan for fiscal year 2014/2105. Phase IB which includes a raised boardwalk and fishing pier will provide pedestrian



Central Park -  
example of design  
standards



## Tournament

October 7 - Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee Meeting 10:30 AM, Room 119

October 12 - Bayshore Wine and Beer Fest

October 14 - Murdock Village CRA, EDO Conference Room 302, 5 PM

October 15 - Suncoast Technology Forum Luncheon, Polo Bar & Grill, Lakewood Ranch, 11:30 - 1 PM

October 16 - CANCELED-IDA Meeting Noon at the EDO Conference Room 302

October 17 - Enterprise Zone Development Agency Meeting, Noon at the EDO Conference Room 302

November 7 - ECEC Meeting (Call for Information)

November 7 - 19th Annual SW FL Blue Chip Community Business Award Luncheon

November 8- Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee Meeting 10:30 AM, Room 119

November 11 - EDO Closed for Veterans Day

November 16 - Parkside Festival

November 18-25 - Global Entrepreneur Week

November 19 - Suncoast Technology Forum Luncheon, Polo Bar & Grill, Lakewood Ranch, 11:30 - 1 PM

November 20 - IDA Meeting Noon at the EDO

access to both sides of US41. Funding for Phase IB is included in FDOT's work plan for 2015/2016. Approval of this contact will enable the project to continue to move forward.

## Save the Date for the 6th Annual Hands Across the Harbor



On January 25, 2014 the 6th Annual Hands Across the Harbor Event will be held at Bayshore Live Oak Park. Participants can choose between an 8K Competitive Run, a 5K Walk; and 10/ 20 mile bike ride or new this year an 8K longboard race. Proceeds from the event benefit the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center. For more information on sponsorship opportunities and registration please visit [www.handsacrosstheharbor.com](http://www.handsacrosstheharbor.com).

## Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee

Join the Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee on October 12 at 5 p.m. to honor the memory of Grace Amodeo at Bayshore Live Oak Park. "Amazing Grace" was an advocate in developing a children's playground at Bayshore Live Oak Park. The playground is completed and many children and their parents are now enjoying the playground. To honor her dedication to the community - a special artist-decorated bench will be dedicated to her on October 12.

## Parkside Ownership Opportunity

Strategically located in Port Charlotte, the Parkside Community is home to 2 local hospitals, two community parks, and several commercial establishments. These new homes provide an opportunity for residents to move into affordable home ownership in the Parkside neighborhood. Through a community partnership with the nonprofit TEAM Parkside and the Parkside Community Redevelopment Area many great things are happening to improve the neighborhood including infrastructure improvements and community programs that will make the neighborhood a great place to live, work and raise your family. All homes include three bedrooms, two baths and a single car garage. Expected sales price will average \$75,000 with the actual sales price established by a licensed independent property appraiser. The individual will need to seek financing through a commercial lender or mortgage company.



Funding for this project was available through a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The funds were

Conference Room 302

November 28 & 29 - EDO  
Closed for Thanksgiving

December 5 - ECEC Meeting  
(Call for Information)

December 9- Charlotte  
Harbor CRA Advisory  
Committee Meeting 10:30  
AM, Room 119

December 17 - Suncoast  
Technology Forum  
Luncheon, Polo Bar & Grill,  
Lakewood Ranch, 11:30 - 1  
PM

December 18 - IDA Meeting  
Noon at the EDO  
Conference Room 302

December 24 & 25 - EDO  
closed for Christmas

January 1 - EDO closed  
New Year's Day

January 2 - ECEC Meeting  
(Call for Information)

January 6 - Charlotte  
Harbor CRA Advisory  
Committee Meeting 10:30  
AM, Room 119

January 13 - Murdock  
Village CRA, EDO  
Conference Room 302, 5 PM

January 15 - IDA Meeting  
Noon at the EDO  
Conference Room 302

January 16 - Enterprise  
Zone Development Agency  
Meeting, Noon at the EDO  
Conference Room 302

January 20 - EDO closed for  
Martin Luther King Day

January 21 - Suncoast  
Technology Forum  
Luncheon, Polo Bar & Grill,  
Lakewood Ranch, 11:30 - 1  
PM

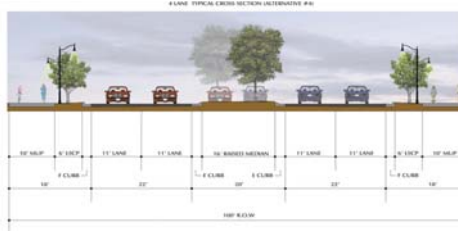


administered by the Charlotte County Housing Office. The grant funds provided an opportunity to improve the housing conditions in the neighborhood. Individuals interested must meet the income requirements which are based on family size. Income Eligibility Example: Two Person Household maximum income \$51,000. Family of six maximum income eligibility: \$73,920.

For additional information please contact the Charlotte County Housing Office at 941.833.6503. Income levels are available for pre-qualification.

## Harbor Boulevard

The Board of County Commissioners approved the design concept for Harbor Blvd. on July 23, 2013. The design plan includes a 10 foot multi-use path; landscaping, street lighting; and maintains four -lanes for traffic. Charlotte County Utilities will replace water and sewer lines due to age of existing lines as part of the road construction. Reclaimed water lines will be installed as part of the project. Staff is negotiating the design contract and plan on bringing it to the BCC later this fall.



## Parkside Logo

A Parkside CRA logo was created and will be incorporated into the Harbor Boulevard project.

## Drainage Improvements

The Board of County Commissioners approved the construction contract to replace weirs at the Elkcam waterway and Fordham waterway. Micro tunnels will be installed under US 41 at these same locations. This project is a water quantity project intended to reduce road and home flooding in the area.

## I wish this was...

The Economic Development Office has developed partnership with In-Tel properties owners of the Promenades Mall to hold the "I wish this was..." campaign. The Campaign will be launched at the Parkside Festival on November 16 and ending on December 31, 2013. This campaign will encourage public participation in identifying the types of businesses to recruit to occupy the vacant storefronts at the mall. More details on the Parkside Campaign will be released in October. For more information on how this program has worked in other cities visit:

January 25 - 6th Annual Hands Across the Harbor

February 3 - Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee Meeting 10:30 AM, Room 119

February 6 - ECEC Meeting (Call for Information)

February 6 - Hottest Business Day in Paradise

February 18 - Suncoast Technology Forum Luncheon, Polo Bar & Grill, Lakewood Ranch, 11:30 - 1 PM

February 17 - EDO closed for President's Day

February 19 - IDA Meeting Noon at the EDO Conference Room 302

March 3 - Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee Meeting 10:30 AM, Room 119

March 6- ECEC Meeting (Call for Information)

March 18 - Suncoast Technology Forum Luncheon, Polo Bar & Grill, Lakewood Ranch, 11:30 - 1 PM

March 19 - IDA Meeting Noon at the EDO Conference Room 302

April 3 - ECEC Meeting (Call for Information)

April 7 - Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee Meeting 10:30 AM, Room 119

[View More Events on our Web Site](#)

If you have business related events you

<http://iwishthiswas.cc/> .

## Charlotte Rides

Charlotte County, in coordination with the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda Metropolitan Planning Organization, has launched a major update to the County's 10-year Transit Development Plan (TDP), called Charlotte Rides. The update considers the future of public transportation in Charlotte County from 2015-2024. Public involvement is an important part of the process, and numerous activities have been planned to support Charlotte Rides, including surveys for transit users and the general public, stakeholder interviews, focus group discussions, and public workshops.



Citizens are encouraged to attend one of the public workshops listed below to express opinions, ideas and vision for future public transportation needs. Staff will be available at these workshops to provide information, answer questions, and take comments.

**Thursday, October 3, 2013** - 3 pm-6 pm  
Charlotte Harbor Event and Convention Center  
Peace River Room-A  
75 Taylor Street, Punta Gorda, 33950

**Wednesday, October 9, 2013** - 3 pm-5 pm  
Englewood/Charlotte Public Library  
Library Meeting Room  
3450 North Access Road, Englewood, 34224

**Tuesday, October 29, 2013** - 4 pm-6 pm  
Cultural Center of Charlotte County  
Palm Room  
2280 Aaron Street, Port Charlotte, 33952

For more information on the Charlotte Rides Plan, please contact Gene Klara or Wendy Scott at the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda Metropolitan Planning Organization(MPO) at (941)-883-3535 or [office@ccmpo.com](mailto:office@ccmpo.com) or visit the following: [www.ccmpo.com](http://www.ccmpo.com) or [www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov](http://www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov).

## Entrepreneur Support Organization

The Charlotte County Entrepreneur Support Organization held its quarterly meeting in September. The group's guest speaker was Dr. Paul C. Thornton, Executive Director of Continuing Education and Off-Campus Programs at Florida Gulf Coast University. Dr. Thornton spoke about a survey to assess the community's interest in a bachelor degree-completion program. The proposed program would be for residents who possess some college but whose work, family, civic responsibilities or other circumstances make it difficult to attend the FGCU campus during weekdays, and would desire the opportunity to complete their degree through a combination of online, evening and weekend courses at

would like listed on  
our web site's  
Calendar of Events,  
please email them to  
our [webmaster](#).

convenient locations in Collier, Lee and Charlotte counties. If approved, the bachelor degree-completion program would launch as soon as Fall 2014. Questions about the Social Media Program or the proposed degree-completion program can be directed to [continuinged@fgcu.edu](mailto:continuinged@fgcu.edu).

Additionally, Dr. Thornton introduced FGCU's Office of Continuing Education Introduces Social Media Marketing Certificate Program to help business professionals gain the advantage of using social media for marketing and branding effectively. A 7-week certification program will be offered by FGCU beginning Nov. 5 to Dec. 17. For more information or to register, go to: <http://registerce.fgcu.edu>.

## Blue Chip Award

BB&T-Oswald Trippe and Company and BB&T Bank coordinate and sponsor the Blue Chip Community Business Award program to recognize successful small businesses and share their stories of how they overcame adversity as a way to teach and inspire other entrepreneurs.

The award, presented to a single Southwest Florida business each year, recognizes that company's innovative methods of overcoming hardship. Previous award winners relied on ingenuity, stamina, dedication and hard work to meet challenges, vault financial hurdles, medical issues and overcome adversity.

Independent judges have selected five finalists from the field of applicants to receive the 2013 award. Only one from Lee, Collier or Charlotte County business community will be honored with the award. The winner and runners-up will be recognized Thursday, Nov. 7, during a luncheon ceremony at Harborside Event Center, in Fort Myers.

Among other regional partners, the Charlotte County Economic Development Office is an endorser of The 2013 Southwest Florida Blue Chip Community Business Award.

## Florida 50 Companies to Watch

In August, GrowFL at the University of Central Florida announced Charlotte County's Arcadia Aerospace, Ind. as one of Florida's "elite" 50 Companies to Watch! This honor only goes to a hand full of Florida second-stage companies selected for their impressive employment rates, revenue growth, entrepreneurial leadership, product innovation, social/community responsibility and competitive business practices.

These companies project continued growth in 2013, with a 30 percent revenue increase and 23 percent growth in employees (both in Florida and out of state) compared to 2012. If their projections hold, these companies will have generated \$1.6 billion in revenue and added 1,369 employees over the last five years - a 194 percent increase in revenue and 148 percent increase in jobs since 2009.

Florida 50 Companies to Watch is a testament to the commitment of community partners to Florida businesses across the state. Celebrating the achievements and bright future for Arcadia Aerospace, Ind., GrowFL will recognize their company and other second-stage companies at the Hard Rock Live in Orlando on October 24<sup>th</sup>! For more information, please contact Kay Tracy in the Charlotte County Economic Development Office 941-764-4944.

## MicroEnterprise Institute

The Microenterprise Institute of Goodwill SWFL announced the graduation of its second Charlotte County class on October 15, 2013. Their Key Note speaker will be Charlotte County's Mark Kole, owner of Ant Factory Mobile, an entrepreneurial organization which is in the business of building custom mobile apps, located in Port Charlotte.

Ten individuals will graduate from the six week course, which is designed to assist those interested in starting or expanding a business in developing a feasibility plan. A feasibility plan allows individuals to test the assumptions they have based their business idea on, from assessing if they really do have a market for their product or service to putting together a projected cash flow that allows them to see what the business would cost to start up and run. After class, many work with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to develop their feasibility plan into a full business plan.

The Microenterprise Institute also recently announced their new Microloan program which allows graduates of their classes to apply for a character based loan of between two and five thousand dollars. Two individuals from the first graduating class in Charlotte County are projected to close on their loans in the beginning of October, and several from the current class are expected to apply in the near future. For more information contact Dorothy Browning at: [dorothybrowning@goodwillswfl.org](mailto:dorothybrowning@goodwillswfl.org).

## EFI Site Consultant Events

Enterprise Florida (EFI) hosted three site consultant events this year to Dallas, Atlanta and New York. The events are attended by Economic Development Office participants across the State as well as Enterprise Florida leadership including Gray Swoope, Florida Secretary of Commerce and CEO of Enterprise Florida and Crystal Sircy, Senior Vice President of Enterprise Florida. The meetings follow a format, which includes a Team Florida dinner to discuss issues and ideas from around the State followed by a full day of small group meetings with top site consultants in each market. Each small group consists of no more than four individual Economic Development Office representatives and each group has private meetings with at least four different site selection firms. The day is completed with a Networking event, in which all consultants and Economic Development Office participants are given the opportunity to network one on one in a relaxed and informal setting.

The EFI site consultant events were attended this year by Lucienne

Pears, Business Recruitment Supervisor and included travel to Dallas in July, New York in August and Atlanta in September. Several quality relationships have been made through these events and will continue to be strengthened in years to come. The goal of the Charlotte County Economic Development Office, in attending these events, is to identify key site consultants best suited and most likely to bring projects to Charlotte County and to develop and maintain those relationships.

## Industrial Asset Management Council

The Industrial Asset Management Council (IAMC) is the leading association of industrial asset management and corporate real estate executives, their suppliers and service providers, and economic developers.

The members of IAMC are a veritable Who's Who of Corporate Real Estate (CRE). Their ranks include senior real estate directors from 3M, Alcoa, Air Products and Chemicals, BASF, PepsiCo, General Mills, Honda of America Manufacturing, Johnson & Johnson Pharmaceuticals Group, The Linde Group, Pfizer, Weyerhaeuser and many other large industrial firms.

These industrial asset leaders voluntarily came together to form an elite organization that sets high professional standards for its members and provides high-quality education. The group meets each year at two separate Professionals Forums that provide quality networking opportunities and in-depth programs.

Lucienne Pears, Business Recruitment Supervisor, attended the IAMC Fall Professional Forum in September along with a team from Enterprise Florida including several of business development managers, SVP Crystal Sircy, COO Griff Salmon and Secretary of Commerce Gray Swoope. The EFI team, along with attending local partners, hosted a private dinner with 26 top commercial real estate brokers and site selectors. This dinner offered a private, one on one opportunity to network with leading site consultants and CRE professionals from around the country.

One of the strategies of the marketing plan for this fiscal year is to increase awareness of Charlotte County as a great and affordable place to live, work and play. Events such as IAMC and other professional site consultant organizations offer a prime outlet for getting the message out about Charlotte County.

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