

Annual Report 2010



Charlotte County, Florida



The economic turbulence of the past few years has impacted our lives in so many ways, and these have been difficult times. We can finally begin to focus on stability with

more predictable revenue sources. Our employees continue to improve processes in order to keep services to Charlotte County citizens as high as possible.

Although the Deepwater Horizon incident affected our area, a quiet hurricane season allowed us to concentrate on the projects at hand. With increasing momentum we are prioritizing Economic Development and Tourism. Charlotte County is a beautiful place to work and live to which we are all committed.

— Ray Sandrock
County Administrator

MOMENTS IN 2010



The methane gas-to-energy project at the Zemel Road landfill broke ground in early 2010 and by October Phase I (the flare) was operational. Funded by Mas Energy, the system collects methane the landfill produces and destroys it through a flare (burning) or engines, to be completed in 2011. Both Charlotte County and Mas Energy will receive ongoing revenue from the sale of energy and carbon credits, with the County's portion estimated to be \$800,000 per year.



New water storage tanks were part of the expansion of the Burnt Store Water Treatment Plant, completed in 2010. The tanks are capable of holding 500,000 gallons, for the sake of reliability and fire flows.

Cover photo: South Gulf Cove Park

Financial Health

The same challenges of previous budget years continue to influence our budget development process. These challenges include:

1. tax reform
2. revenue shortfalls
3. budget cuts in personnel, operating and reserves
4. maintaining levels of service while decreasing costs
5. delaying or eliminating capital projects funded by ad valorem
6. finding efficiencies.

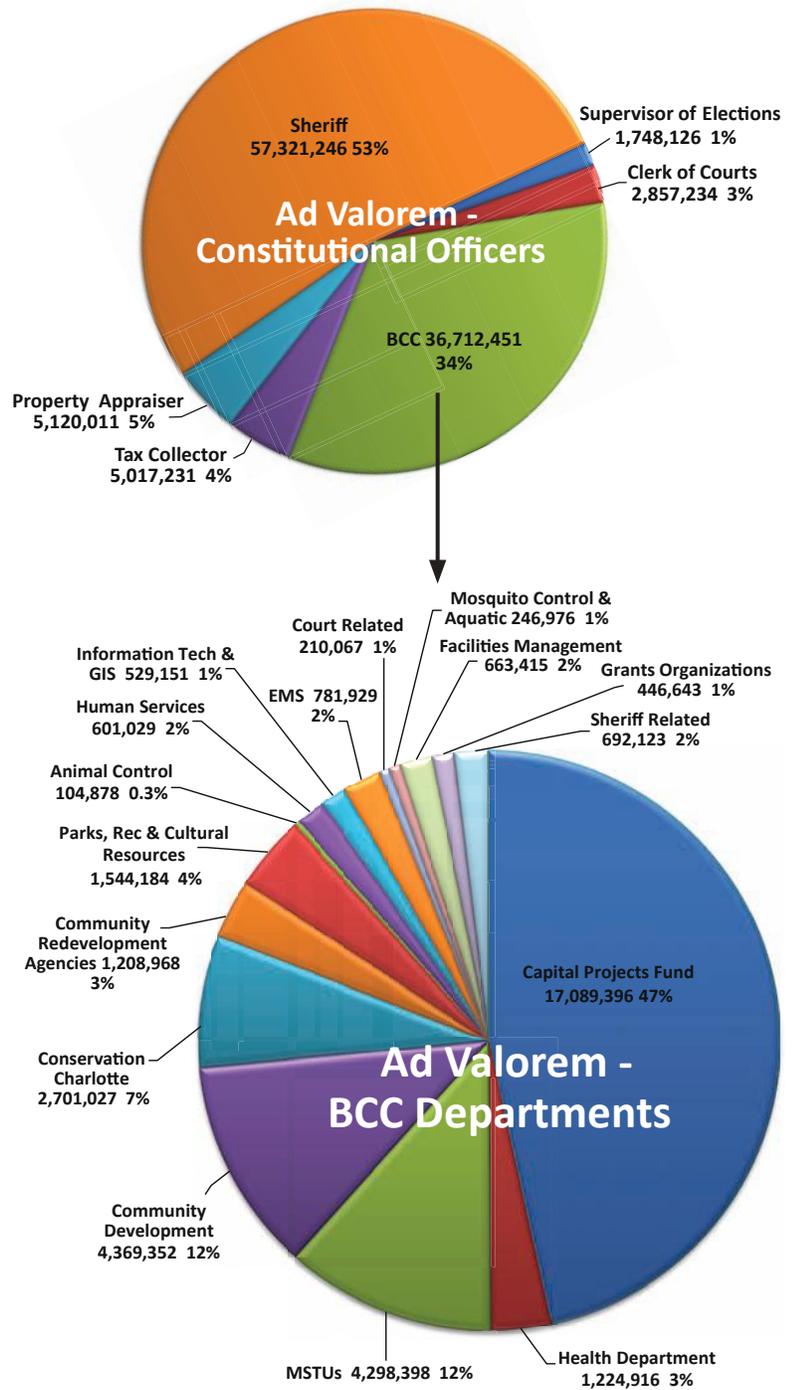
During the FY10/11 budget process, the County established three primary strategies to meet these challenges:

- Capitalize on Performance Based Budgeting
 - Build on work done in FY09/10
 - Format to summarize for decision making
- Extend Strategic Focus of BCC Goals
 - Key issues by strategic focus area
 - Demonstrate linkage to programs
- Stabilization with Continuous Improvement
 - Secure current service levels
 - Prepare for the time when growth returns
 - Strategic use of budget stabilization funds
 - Continue to identify efficiencies and collaborations

Revenue Shortfall

In 2009 Charlotte County was faced with decreased revenues not only in property tax but other areas, including telecommunications taxes, ½ cent sales tax, other state shared revenues, and franchise fees. The total combined revenue shortfall was projected to be \$42 million for FY09/10. However, to offset the effects of the revenue shortfalls, all BCC departments and the Constitutional Officers worked together to find solutions to the shortfall:

BCC Reductions	\$4,600,000
Rollback for Sheriff's Budget	\$8,700,000
Capital Project Re-direction	\$2,800,000
FY09/10 Department Savings	\$2,000,000
Fiscal Stabilization	\$3,600,000



<i>Ad Valorem</i>	<i>FY 09/10 Actual</i>	<i>FY 10/11 Adopted</i>
<i>Total Property Taxes</i>	<i>118,425,340</i>	<i>113,074,697</i>
<i>BCC Depts</i>	<i>46,260,284</i>	<i>41,010,849</i>
<i>Sheriff</i>	<i>57,489,246</i>	<i>57,321,246</i>
<i>Other Constitutional Officers</i>	<i>14,675,810</i>	<i>14,742,602</i>

Sustainability

In 2010 the Green Building Program proudly presented the first ever “Green Builder of the year” award at the opening ceremony of the second Green Futures Expo. The Green Builder of the Year Award is part of the incentives provided by the Green Building Program.



The program is voluntary to builders and property owners and has been developed to help Charlotte County become a more sustainable community by reducing the environmental impact of buildings, and promoting economic and environmental health in the County.

Since August, 2010 Charlotte County has been hosting Sustainability Educational Forums. The purpose of the forums is to educate Charlotte County’s employees and citizens on different subjects of sustainability. The presentations are organized by the Building and Growth Management Department and videos of the presentations are available in the Charlotte County website.

The Charlotte County Economic Development Office and Building and Growth Management department held the 2nd annual Southwest Florida Green Futures Expo and Energy Options Conference. The event was held at the Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center on November 12 & 13, 2010.

The Green Futures Expo is a tradeshow designed to highlight the products and services that benefit consumers and businesses for a future of green living. Several workshops were conducted to educate professionals and general public in subjects related to green building and sustainability.

The Energy Options Conference provided a venue for the exchange of information, resources and awareness about alternative Energy Options such as Geothermal heating and cooling and Zero Energy options for residential applications.



Public Work’s Solid Waste Division is a leader in renewable energy at the Zemel Road Landfill with the 2010 installation of a system that collects the gas created by the decomposition of waste materials and uses it to produce electricity. The Curbside Single Stream Recycling Program was also launched in 2010, which makes recycling easy for Charlotte County residents.

Charlotte County is committed to protecting our resources and preserving our beautiful county. We are working towards a more sustainable future; a future that is driven by our Mission: To be the energy in making Charlotte County a beautiful and enriching place to live.

Economic Development

The Economic Development Office (EDO) responded to Google’s “Request for Information” in search of a test community for their new ultra high-speed Internet. Google’s plan is to build and test ultra high-speed broadband networks in one, or a number of, trial locations across the country which will deliver speeds of more than “100 times faster” than what most Americans have access to today. The EDO worked with grass-root citizen-led organizations in

the effort along with other city and County departments to complete the application. A survey was released to gauge the community’s residential and business internet usage and petition Google to come into the community. As a result, the EDO received over 150 responses the first day. With continued local support, the EDO is optimistic that Charlotte County will have a good chance of becoming part of Google’s initiative, making it more attractive for business recruitment and expansion, job creation, and quality of life.

In December of 2010 the EDO received notice that Google will be delaying the announcement of its selected community or communities. Although they had planned to announce by the end of 2010 because of the level of interest was beyond their expectations, the decision will be delayed until early 2011. Google is not re-opening its selection process, but simply taking a bit more time to decide. So we’re still in the running!



Sales Tax Projects

In 2010 the Midway Boulevard road project completed the permitting stage and construction began. The Edgewater Boulevard road project and all sidewalk projects were in the design phase.



Five reverse osmosis trains with holding tubes for Reverse Osmosis Membranes at the Burnt Store Water Treatment Plant.

Capital Improvement Projects

Burnt Store Water Treatment Plant – In early 2010 the Burnt Store Water Treatment Plant upgrades were completed and celebrated at a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The Plant utilizes advanced reverse osmosis membrane technology and is now capable of treating up to 3.6 million gallons of water per day, which allows Charlotte County Utilities to meet both current and future water demands for the service area. The expansion included the addition of new water storage tanks, capable of holding 500,000 gallons, for the sake of reliability and fire flows.

Water sources of the plant come from two ground water aquifers, the Hawthorne and the Floridian Aquifer, which are both brackish water supplies. Reverse osmosis technology allows water that is not usually of sufficient quality to be used as drinking water.

Coral Creek Bridge – The Coral Creek Bridge Replacement project was partially completed and the new bridge opened to traffic on June 7, 2010. The project replaced the existing, structurally-deficient bridge with a cast-in-place concrete bridge. The project eliminates the sharp curve at the junction of CR 775 and CR 771 and adds clearance for boaters.

Piper Road – The Piper Road North project continued design efforts in 2010 and received the SWFWMD permit. A major portion of the Piper Road South project was completed. Work done included over 85% of all drainage work, 49% of curbing, 78% of sewer main, 83% of water main, 79% of roadway lighting wire and conduit, and 79% of material and 41% of road base material were placed.



On the Piper Road Project, the curb and gutter is installed before the base material is placed. This step allows for a more efficient work flow, because it is difficult to remove the base material to install the curbing. The curbing also creates a clearly defined space or box for installing the base material in by delineating the road surface and providing a “concrete” (literally) elevation. This material is placed in layers or lifts to ensure that maximum compaction can be achieved.



Construction of the \$44 million Jail Expansion project was completed in June 2010. The photo above includes the sally port opening and front doors of the grey-roofed expansion. The project includes several buildings, housing units, and a special management unit. The expansion increases the bed count from 528 to almost 1000 beds.

Charlotte Sports Park

The second spring training season for the Tampa Bay Rays was a major success, with the team having a record 20 wins. The Rays also had the highest win percentage in the Grapefruit league in 2010.

At the end of their second regular season, the Charlotte Stone Crabs won the Florida State League South Division series for the second year in a row. The team also set an attendance record with the best average per game—2,679—in the league.

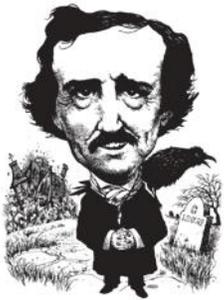


Quality of Life

Charlotte County is rich with history, preserves, and indoor and outdoor activities for residents and visitors alike.

The Big Read

For six weeks in early 2010, Charlotte County Libraries offered "The Big Read," a series of free literary events inspired by the works of 19th Century author Edgar Allan Poe. The kick-off featured famous author Stephen King,



followed by over twenty-five events held around the county. The grant-funded program was a collaboration between the Charlotte County Library System, Charlotte County Public Schools, the Arts and Humanities Council of Charlotte County, the Charlotte Players, the Cultural Center of Charlotte County, Florida Gulf

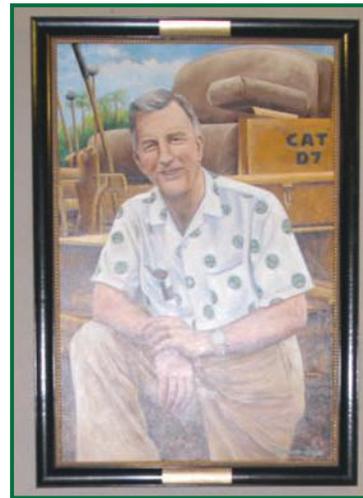
Coast University and the Peace River Center for Writers at Edison State College. A theater production and outdoor movies of Poe's works were part of the Big Read finale at Bayshore Live Oak Park in April 2010.

Television Broadcasting Improvements

To help hearing-impaired viewers in our community, in 2010 Charlotte County Television (CC-TV) initiated closed captioning for the Board of County Commissioners meetings. The closed-captioning service airs with the live meetings on the second, third, and fourth Tuesday of each month.

75th Anniversary of UF/IFAS Extension Service

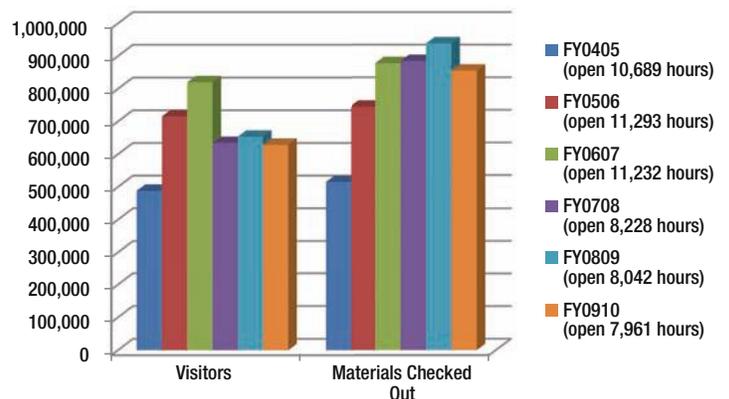
Extension Services celebrated the 75th Anniversary of UF/IFAS Extension Services with the dedication of a portrait of "Doc" McQueen to the historic Charlotte County



Courthouse. The late Mr. N. H. "Doc" McQueen was the first Agricultural Extension Agent, and served with Charlotte County for over 30 years.



Library Visitors & Circulation FY 04/05 to FY 09/10



Charlotte County Libraries had 628,580 visitors in FY 09/10.



El Jobean boat ramp and parking renovations were completed, including construction of a new ramp, loading dock and paved parking.

Charlotte County Human Services

Human Services coordinated the implementation of Charlotte County's Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSPI) with the Florida Department of Community Affairs which provided federal funds of over 4 million dollars. The purpose of the NSP is to provide back-to-work construction activities, homes for low to moderate income households, and infrastructure improvements to blighted communities experiencing numerous foreclosed and abandoned properties.

The final balance of the 19 million from the 2005 Hurricane Housing Recovery (HHR) grant funding was released to the last planned housing development complex. Charlotte Crossing will provide 82 affordable apartments for seniors. The balance of the remaining unallocated HHR funding was awarded to Habitat to Humanity to rehabilitate housing for eligible households. The HHR grant is scheduled to close out June 30, 2011.



In FY 2010 The Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center had over 300 bookings that resulted in a total attendance of over 96,000.

Government Academy

The Government Academy program rolled out in September 2010. Offered to both citizens and employees, the program consisted of six workshops, meeting every Wed. from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in locations throughout the county. Locations included the Public Safety Building in Punta Gorda, the County Administration Center in Murdock, and the East Port Campus.

The primary goal was to provide residents and staff the opportunity to share and learn about the inner-workings of the County. The workshops focused on the various departments under the Board of County Commissioners. County administration and commissioners also addressed the participants.



The Brush 15 Truck and has three drive axles, making it a 6 x 6.

Public Safety

In 2010 Charlotte County Fire and EMS put into service a new brush truck. The specialty vehicle is a 1985 Military M35A2 that was completely modified for the fire service by the Fire/EMS Emergency Vehicle Department. Brush 15 carries 750 gallons of water and has pump and roll capabilities. The unit is currently located in the northern sections of Charlotte County but is ready to respond wherever it may be needed.

Smart Charlotte 2050: The Comprehensive Plan

The Board of County Commissioners approved the Smart Charlotte 2050 Comprehensive Plan on July 20, 2010. Because of challenges to the adoption of the plan, the effective date was delayed through the end of the year.

The Building and Growth Management department won an award of merit from the Florida chapter of the American Planning Association in the "Best Practices" category for the Smart Charlotte 2050 comprehensive plan. This is the second state-level award the plan has received, the other coming from the Florida Planning and Zoning Association (FPZA) in 2009.



Charlotte County
Board of County Commissioners

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Produced by Charlotte County Government.



The Medical District CRA

In September of 2010, the Board of County Commissioners unanimously approved designating the area in central Port Charlotte known as the Medical District area as a Community Revitalization Area. They also asked



that Charlotte County citizens begin identifying their hopes and dreams for the district through public meetings called charrettes, public surveys and personal interviews. The goal of these activities is the development of a Citizens' Master Plan for the district.

Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners



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