



Advancing BCC Strategic Focus Areas

2015/16 – 2016/17 Budget Process

Table of Contents

Process and Purpose of Materials	1
Overview of Citizen Input	2
Overview of Employee Survey	4
Focus Area Analysis	5
1. Water Resources	7
2. Efficient & Effective Government	9
3. Quality of Life	11
4. Fiscal / Financial Planning	13
5. Growth Management	15
6. Public Safety	17
7. Economic Development	19
8. Human Services	21

Process and Purpose of Materials

The budget process is divided into four major stages:

Stage I – Establish Broad Goals to Guide Government Decision Making

Stage II – Develop Approaches to Achieve Goals

Stage III – Develop a Budget with Approaches to Achieve Goals

Stage IV – Evaluate Performance and Make Adjustments

Stage I is primarily the responsibility of the BCC and the purpose of this document is to provide a well rounded source of information as an update for direction to the organization for 2015/16 – 2016/17. The following pages summarize input from three critical sources: our citizens, our employees and our internal experts.

Citizen input: During November and December a citizen survey was conducted by ICMA and the National Research Center. The National Citizen Survey is a standardized survey that makes use of statistically valid methodology, questions and sample sizes. This survey is similar to ones done in 2007 and 2010 giving the county the ability to compare not only with those results but also with 500+ governments across the nation. Those results are summarized on page 2. In addition, input from the Charlotte Assembly has been included where applicable.

Employee input: In October of 2014 we asked our employees to evaluate the organization through an on-line survey. Approximately half of the organization responded. This survey provided us with an assessment of our strengths and weaknesses as well as a comparison our results from 2010 and 2012.

Internal expertise: To take advantage of the wide range of knowledge and expertise within the organization we brought together subject matter experts from across County departments to conduct an analysis of our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) by BCC Focus Area. In addition we asked them to forecast what they saw as the key issues for the next 2, 5 and 10 years. This year we expanded the participation in the SWOT analysis to include other agencies to provide a broader perspective.

Once the BCC has confirmed their direction to the organization, we will bring these same participants back together to discuss what plans and initiatives are or could be implemented to advance those goals. That information will be brought back to the BCC in a series of Budget Workshops in May.

Overview of Citizen Input

The National Citizens Survey provides the opinions of a representative sample of Charlotte County residents about community quality of life, service delivery, civic participation and unique issues of local interest. A periodic sounding of resident opinion offers staff, elected officials and other stakeholders an opportunity to identify challenges and to plan for and evaluate improvements and to sustain services and amenities for long-term success.

From a broad perspective our residents' responses were similar to those of other participating communities nation-wide. In terms of comparison to previous results, this marks the fourth time Charlotte County has engaged in this survey process: 2007, 2010, 2012 and 2014. The ratings received in 2010 were significantly higher than in the 2007 survey. In fact, Charlotte was recognized by ICMA as having the best overall improvement nation-wide. The ratings received in 2012 and 2014 were essentially a validation of the 2010 results, although we improved compared to the national benchmark, on almost all of the questions there was statistically no difference from the 2010 and 2012 ratings.

Most residents experienced a good quality of life in Charlotte County and believed the county is a good place to live. The overall quality of life in Charlotte County was rated as "excellent" or "good" by 78% (73% in 2012, 69% in 2010 and 57% in 2007) of respondents. A majority (90%) reported they plan on staying in Charlotte County for the next five years. Charlotte was higher than the benchmark as a place to retire, and lower than the benchmark as a place to raise children.

A variety of characteristics of the community was evaluated by those participating in the study. The characteristics receiving the most favorable ratings were the feeling of safety, the natural environment and opportunities to volunteer in Charlotte County. The characteristics receiving the least positive ratings were employment opportunities and ease of bus travel in Charlotte County.

In general, survey respondents demonstrated mild distrust in local government. Less than half rated the overall direction being taken by Charlotte County as "good" or "excellent." This was similar to the benchmark. Again, less than half felt that the County welcomed citizen involvement, which is lower than the benchmark. Those residents who had interacted with an employee of Charlotte County in the previous 12 months gave high marks to those employees. Most rated their overall impression of employees as "excellent" or "good."

On average, residents gave somewhat favorable ratings to most local government services. County service ratings were able to be compared to the benchmark database. Of the 30 services for which comparisons were available, 2 were above the benchmark comparison, 22 were similar to the benchmark comparison and 6 were below. The following page contains a table that details for each service the rating for 2014 compared with 2012, 2010, 2007, and the national benchmark. Data that is significant to the BCC Focus Areas is also summarized in those sections.

Service Ratings

Service Provided	2014	2012	2010	2007	Benchmark
Sheriff services	87%	81%	79%	70%	Similar
Fire services	90%	91%	93%	94%	Similar
Ambulance or emergency medical services	92%	89%	92%	90%	Similar
Crime prevention	78%	71%	61%	49%	Similar
Fire prevention and education	75%	76%	72%	70%	Similar
Emergency preparedness	74%	76%	77%		Similar
Traffic enforcement	67%				Similar
Road repair	49%	48%	45%	37%	Similar
Street lighting	56%				Similar
Sidewalk maintenance	56%				Similar
Traffic signal timing	43%				Similar
Bus or transit services	21%	26%	23%	21%	Lower
Garbage collection	92%	90%	87%	77%	Similar
Recycling	90%	87%	89%	77%	Higher
Yard waste pick-up	90%	82%	85%		Higher
Storm drainage	51%	55%	50%		Similar
Drinking water	55%	54%	56%		Lower
Sewer services	71%	72%	70%		Similar
County parks	80%	84%	82%	67%	Similar
Recreation programs or classes	57%	66%	57%	57%	Lower
Recreation centers or facilities	58%	63%	68%	56%	Lower
Land use, planning and zoning	33%	33%	32%	15%	Lower
Code enforcement	33%	28%	27%	22%	Lower
Animal control	63%	57%	57%	47%	Similar
Economic development	33%	25%	32%	26%	Similar
Health services	59%	60%	59%	49%	Similar
Public library services	87%	82%	80%	80%	Similar
Public information services	58%	60%	60%	55%	Similar
Preservation of natural areas	69%	60%	60%		Similar
County open space	56%				Similar

Overview of Employee Survey

The employee survey consisted of 25 statements grouped into 4 major categories: teamwork, communication, organization and personal. For each statement, employees were asked to evaluate the organizations capabilities and rank how critical it was for success. In the past (2010 and 2012) this survey was conducted by a third party but this year we administrated it ourselves. Because of this change we are able to compare relative strengths and opportunities but cannot gauge the magnitude of progress for this current cycle.

Strengths

Our greatest strength is an extremely dedicated workforce. An overwhelming majority of our employees not only rated themselves as being “committed to doing quality work” and “understanding how to be a good team player” but rated their fellow employees in the same way.

Further, they tell us that being “open for business” has become part of our culture. Employees say they “know what is expected of them”, have an “understanding of our business goals” and as an organization “we consistently try to improve our customer service for our external clients”. In addition, they understand how their role fits in with the organization’s future.

Opportunities

Just as important, we also received feedback on where we need to improve. While most employees felt there was “a high level of teamwork” within their department, they didn’t feel that existed across departments or for the organization as a whole. The County is a large diverse organization and communication is a challenging task. Our employees tell us that we need to improve our efforts across the organization, between departments and also within departments when changes occur.

There is still room for greater efficiency as employees tell us we can improve in terms of having “consistent, usable work practices”.

Much has been said about employee morale and the survey gave that speculation some credence. While it varied widely across departments only 63% said they “would recommend my organization to friends and family as a good place to work” and only 51% said “my employer is helping me meet my career objectives”.

Focus Area Analysis

The County has a great resource in the knowledge and expertise of employees. We want to make full use of that knowledge at the beginning of this process. During December, 2014 we brought together the subject area experts around each of the BCC Focus Areas. Where applicable we also included representatives from other agencies. Our goal was to get all the players in the room at the same time and have a focused conversation about where we are and what the future could look like.

Prior to the meeting each participating department prepared a SWOT analysis from the perspective of that particular Focus Area. A SWOT analysis is a process to identify Strengths and Weaknesses (internal) and Opportunities and Threats (these are usually external) to develop a well rounded perspective of our current environment. Participants brought their work to the meeting and took turns presenting their perspective. The entire group then prioritized what they considered to be the most important elements for each category.

Having that work as a background we then asked them to think 10 years out and identify what they thought were the most critical issues or trends we would be facing. We then backed up to 5 years and then 2 years to distinguish between long range issues that can guide policy and short term issues and initiatives that will shape this next budget process.

Once the BCC has confirmed their direction to the organization, we will bring these same individuals back together to develop a comprehensive list of programs and initiatives that are, or could be put in place. The goal is to demonstrate clearly how our various initiatives and plans are interrelated, improve communication and coordination, and provide the BCC with options for advancing their goals.

The following pages contain an executive summary of the work that was done at the December meetings. Each contains the prioritized list of our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, a summary of forecasted long range issues as well as short term issues and initiatives that will impact the 2015/16 – 2016/17 Budget. At the end of each summary there is also a list of the Board's current directional statements and progress made toward them.

Global Trends and Projections

This year when we asked the groups to think 10 years out there were some forecasted trends that showed up in every group and merit being highlighted. Although the impact of these trends would vary by focus area the root issues are the same.

Population Growth and Demographics

No one can project when, but we are all confident that within the next ten years the County will experience significant growth. Large amounts of vacant land, an affordable cost of living for a coastal community and an improving economy will eventually draw a large influx of people. Where those people choose to build and potential development of Murdock Village and Babcock Ranch could dramatically change the landscape of the County and redefine where services and infrastructure are needed.

Regardless of what direction development takes a significant portion of the population will continue to be retirees. Our feeling is that baby-boomers will have higher expectations and be more vocal than current retirees. Research indicates they have not prepared adequately for retirement and will be just as needy as current retirees, if not more.

Infrastructure

Currently the County is faced with \$500+ million in capital projects that are unfunded and population growth will only add to that number. In addition, we have inherited an aging and often disjunctive system of roads, bridges, canals and pipes that need an accelerated level of maintenance to insure they will be viable in 10 years.

This factor impacts every focus area. For instance, when the Public Safety participants identified what the most critical issues would be 10 years from now, one of their first responses was “the condition of roads within the County”. Unless the County’s road system is adequately maintained and keeps pace with population growth traffic congestion will increase, resulting in longer response times, increased accidents and evacuation difficulties. Depending on where development occurs, transportation patterns and service delivery needs could change dramatically.

Technology

The pace of change in technology will not slow down and technologies will continue to converge so that every area of life will be impacted.

- Every job will be touched by technology, all processes will be automated and every worker will be a technology worker,
- Continued consumerization of technology and citizens will demand self-service and information access,
- Internet of everything (it is projected that by 2020 over 60 billion “things” will be connected to the internet),
- New communication tools and methods will supplant the current ones,
- Data for decision making will be real time.

Strategic Focus Area: Water Resources

Goal: Ensure quality and quantity of water resources when and where they are needed and provide a safe and reliable water supply.

Strengths

- High level of community awareness and desire to conserve water and preserve water quality.
- Resources in place for managing water quality, including Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ guidelines, fertilizer ordinances, training, and agency partnerships.
- Sufficient potable water resources to satisfy demand through 2035.

Weaknesses

- High proliferation of old septic systems.
- County is not actively engaged in regional storm water management.
- No “water quality” expert on staff and therefore must rely on others for monitoring.

Opportunities

- Take advantage of existing programs and training (e.g.: Freshwater Pond Monitoring, Florida Master Naturalist, Sea Grant, Florida-Friendly Landscaping™).
- Enact Low Impact Development (LID) ordinance and practices.
- Continue Conservation Charlotte to take advantage of land availability near creeks and reservoir.

Threats

- Fluctuating flow levels of the Peace River, both in quantity and quality
- Mandates – at both Federal and State level, new mandates are routinely passed down.
- There will be an increasing number of septic tank failures due to the extent and age of systems.

Long-range Issues & Trends

As the economy continues to recovery there will be development along our waterways, escalating and changing the nature of water quality issues.

As the development within the County increases there will be a “transition in mindset” from rural to urban, aiding in the implementation of the next item.

Sewer & water expansion – an increasing number of aging septic systems will fail with replacement being both expensive and impractical. The primary strategy for dealing with this issue is to implement the County’s Wastewater and Water Master Plans expanding connectivity to water and sewer. A pilot project is in process in East/West Spring Lake area with the goal of establishing a model for the rest of the County.

Funding for both expansion and revitalization of infrastructure will be problematic.

Implementation of Basin Management Plans (BMAP) will increase expenses and regulation, particularly around agricultural lands.

Technology will profoundly change the way we do business.

Immediate Issues and Initiatives

Pilot sewer project – construction of sewers within the East/West Spring Lake area.

Implementation of Manatee Protection Plan (MPP) will impact development along waterways.

Monitor the potential restructuring of Florida Forever to accommodate Constitutional Amendment.

Potential State legislation to pre-empt local ordinances.

Expand educational efforts by focusing on HOAs

Implementation of Habitat Conservation Plan.

2013/14 BCC Goals or Directives:

Water Quality

- East & West Spring Lake Wastewater Pilot Study
- Environmental Impact Study - phosphate mining
- Proactive strategies for dealing with TMDL
- Expansion of sewer along US41

Water Quantity

- Develop alternative water sources via interconnects
- Equitable solution to Water Authority rehab of infrastructure
- Development of Master Water Plan

Citizen Survey Responses

Survey Question	2014	2012	2010	2007	Benchmark
Preservation of natural areas	69%	60%	60%		Similar
Rating of storm drainage	51%	55%	50%		Similar
Rating of drinking water	55%	54%	56%		Lower
Rating of sewer services	71%	72%	70%		Similar
Overall natural environment	83%				Similar
Conserved water at home	93%				Higher

Strategic Focus Area: Efficient and Effective Government

Goal: Facilitate the organization's capacity to govern and manage effectively in the rapidly changing and challenging environment.

Strengths

- We have a high level of experience and knowledge – both institutional and in subject area.
- High proliferation of technology throughout the organization and strong web presence.
- Strong partnerships with stakeholders.
- Ombudsman concept has worked well in Community Development.

Weaknesses

- High proliferation of technology leads to inadequate staffing levels and support from IT.
- Stabilization of economy and rising expectations has left us with low staff to workload ratios.
- Lack of prioritization and resources makes project management problematic.
- Morale – staff perceive second guessing of public and elected officials as attack on credibility.

Opportunities

Increased focus and investment in technology could afford:

- Standardization of processes and enterprise applications,
- Staff enabling technology / mobility,
- Automated and web-based service delivery.

Threats

- Improving job market makes it increasingly hard to hire and retain qualified staff.
- Lack of political support for investing in technology.
- Cyber incident / virus.
- Population growth and lack of public support could overtax an aging infrastructure.

Long-range Issues & Trends

Convergence of technology – Everything will be touch by technology, most processes will be automated, we will have the internet of everything, every worker will be a technology worker, a technically savvy public will demand on-line information, services and involvement. The pace of innovation and subsequent obsolescence of technology will continue, making it difficult to project “what’s next”.

Employee related – over the next 5 to 10 years there will be a large exodus of long-term experienced employees. Employees of the future will have a different mentality about workplace needs and demands. The workforce will be increasingly mobile and/or home based.

The population of the county will increase and a large portion of that growth will continue to be retirees. Baby-boomers will have higher expectations and be more vocal. Current research indicates they have not prepared adequately for retirement and will be just as needy as current retirees, if not more.

As the population increases, the demand for infrastructure will grow. Funding the maintenance of aging infrastructure will be a challenge.

Medical / health care – Impacts of the Affordable Health Care Act will likely mean an increase in unmet needs, combining households and restructuring of health care benefit packages.

Immediate Issues and Initiatives

Coming out of Crisis – it is a whole new world. We have to think differently to meet increasing demand, high costs and catching up with delayed maintenance. One example is spatial planning to meet increased demand and staffing.

Increased pressure on IT – trends include increased need for technical research for acquisition and replacement of critical applications, consumerization of technology, outsourcing of IT in a distributed environment, utilization of data for analytics, social media and mobile apps. All of which calls for a workforce with greater technical expertise.

Political change at the federal level – with control of the legislature shifting we will likely see changes that impact us a local level.

2013/14 BCC Goals or Directives:

- Define optimal/acceptable levels of service
- Continue development of overall web presence
 - Focus on service delivery
 - More intuitive
- Follow up on Employee Survey with focus on retention strategies
- Expansion of wellness program and use of Employee Health Center
- Increase community outreach of BCC
- Enhance credibility of the organization
- Proactive strategies for intergovernmental relationships
- Explore ombudsman concept for process improvement
- Continued focus on efficiencies

Citizen Survey Responses

Survey Question	2014	2012	2010	2007	Benchmark
Value of services for the taxes paid to Charlotte	52%	47%	38%	30%	Similar
Overall rating of services provided by Charlotte	68%	64%	61%	44%	Similar
Overall rating of services provided by Federal	36%	38%	33%	28%	Similar
Overall direction Charlotte County is taking	47%	43%	36%	29%	Similar
Confidence in County government	39%				Similar
Welcoming citizen involvement	35%				Lower
Acting in best interest of Charlotte County	45%				Similar
Overall customer service of County	75%	79%	80%	69%	Similar

Strategic Focus Area: Quality of Life

Goal: Enhance community life by clean air and water, conservation of wildlife and natural resources, and provide community amenities through public safety in a business friendly atmosphere.

Strengths

- Charlotte's natural resources are one of our greatest assets with the Gulf of Mexico, Charlotte Harbor, multiple waterways and large expanses of unspoiled natural habitats.
- The county offers a wide diversity of recreational opportunities for all ages. This is available through programs and facilities in addition to the natural resources stated above. A great example is the Rays' spring training and Stone Crabs minor league baseball.
- Charlotte County offers a lower cost of living than many communities and has repeatedly been noted as a great place to retire.

Weaknesses

- With no real town center and a large volume of platted lots Charlotte County has poor development patterns and lacks identity. We are often identified as "between Sarasota and Fort Myers".
- As a governmental body we are often reactive rather than proactive. This makes it difficult to adhere to long range strategic planning that could transform our image.
- Some areas of the county, particularly commercial corridors, are not aesthetically pleasing.

Opportunities

- We can shape our own identity. We have a large amount of vacant land, Murdock Village in particular, that provide an opportunity for planned development.
- Develop a theme for the aesthetics of the US 41 corridor.
- Local sales tax initiatives can enhance aesthetics and amenities of community.
- Focus on economic development to become more than just a retirement community.

Threats

- Vocal minority of population are opposed to change and/or development.
- If aesthetic issues are not addressed, our image will continue to deteriorate.
- Baby-boomers will have higher expectations and be more vocal. Research indicates they have not prepared adequately for retirement and will be just as needy as current retirees, if not more.

Long-range Issues & Trends

Identity – this is an overarching issue that impacts all of the focus areas (echoed at the Charlotte Assembly). What does Charlotte County want to be – a retirement community, an economic engine, an eco-tourist destination, or countless other options and combinations. Without a clearly communicated vision of what we want to be, strategies and priorities are conflicted. A clear vision enables policy makers and staff to stay focused and not be distracted by the "squeaky wheel".

Economic development – Unless our tax base diversifies, the tax burden will remain primarily on backs of residents. This would require attracting and growing businesses that provide high paying/high tech jobs. Partnerships with educators to provide the appropriate higher/continuing education can ensure we have a skilled local workforce. A tax base that is primarily residential cannot keep pace with the demand for services.

Immediate Issues and Initiatives

Develop a clear vision of who/what Charlotte County wants to be as a force for coordinating action and providing direction. This requires branding and aggressive promotion.

It is important to show some advancement in the aesthetics of the County, particularly along US 41.

Take advantage of the Local Sales Tax initiatives to showcase commitment to Quality of Life, this includes not just construction but adequately funding operations.

We are already seeing rising citizen expectations and that trend will continue.

2013/14 BCC Goals or Directives:

- Expand on ways to gather citizen input
- Charlotte Assembly to solicit citizen participation in shaping the vision of the county’s future.
- Articulation of Charlotte County’s vision at each level of the organization
- Explore developing separate millage district for Library funding
- Explore developing separate millage district for mosquito control
- Partner with education to retain a younger population and provide a work force for economic development
- Enhance the aesthetics of major gateways
- Promote assets we already have – trails, paths, passive parks, state lands
- Enhance code enforcement

Citizen Survey Responses

Survey Question	2014	2012	2010	2007	Benchmark
The overall quality of life in Charlotte County	78%	73%	69%	57%	Similar
Charlotte County as a place to live	82%	80%	78%	64%	Similar
Ease of car travel	68%	66%	66%	47%	Similar
Availability of paths and walking trails	51%	41%	36%	44%	Similar
Overall ease of travel	78%				Similar
Availability of recreational opportunities	61%	54%	54%	44%	Similar
Visited a neighborhood park or County park	80%	80%	86%	81%	Similar
Shopping opportunities	54%	47%	60%	60%	Similar
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	54%	52%	48%		Similar
Overall education and enrichment	52%				Lower
Sense of community	47%	56%	59%	46%	Lower
Charlotte County as a place to raise children	57%	56%	53%	47%	Lower
Charlotte County as a place to retire	78%	83%	80%	63%	Higher
Availability of housing options	52%				Similar
Overall natural environment	83%				Similar

Strategic Focus Area: Fiscal/Financial Planning

Goal: Continue to increase the effectiveness of local government and maintain a strong financial condition.

Strengths

- We have long range financial plans at multiple levels and have built adequate reserves. Charlotte County was proactive in making reductions early in the economic downturn and continues to be “forward thinking”.
- We have strong fiscal controls to ensure operations are transparent and prudent.
- We have a broad mix of revenue sources (Ad Valorem, Sales Tax, MSBUs, enterprise funds).

Weaknesses

- Lack of succession planning within the organization.
- Lack of competitive wages impacts staff recruitment and retention.
- Limited resources are not keeping pace with expectations (service levels) or needs (maintenance of infrastructure)

Opportunities

- Update and consolidate enterprise software systems.
- Strategic use of funding opportunities (RESTORE, Impact Fees, low interest rates to fund Sale Tax projects).
- Economic Development diversification.

Threats

- Citizen expectations increasing faster than we can keep pace with.
- Lack of infrastructure and/or aging infrastructure in many parts of the County.
- Economic uncertainties can impact property values and employment levels.
- Technology advances faster than we can keep pace with.

Long-range Issues & Trends

Employee related – over the next 5 to 10 years there will be a large exodus of long-term experienced employees. 66% of employees are between 45 and 74 years of age (32% are 55 years of age and over, with 15% at 60 and older). As the economy recovers we will face increased competition for qualified staff.

Population & demographics – sometime in the next 10 years there will be dramatic growth in population and a large portion of that will be retirees. Baby-boomers will have higher expectations and be more vocal. Current research indicates they have not prepared adequately for retirement and will be just as needy as current retirees, if not more.

Economy – sometime in the next 10 years there will also be a major economic downturn. Balancing this with population growth will be a challenge.

Infrastructure will perhaps be our greatest challenge. We already have an aging infrastructure that demands an accelerated maintenance schedule and population growth will necessitate new investment and construction.

Immediate Issues and Initiatives

We are at a “critical juncture” in a number of areas. Over the past several years the focus has been on downsizing and then maintaining the status quo. We are at the point where deferred maintenance coupled with rising expectations will require additional resources and staffing. Similarly, our focus on technology has been primarily maintenance. As distributed and mobile technologies have become mainstream and affordable it will require a major effort to transition our current systems.

Infrastructure – insuring the future of our infrastructure requires developing master plans now and incorporating those plans into long term budgetary projections. Construction cost will continue to increase.

Political turmoil at the national level will likely impact local priorities and funding. Monitor legislation and mandates at both Federal and State level.

2013/14 BCC Goals or Directives:

- Stabilize and maintain our internal infrastructure and improve where opportunities occur
- Secure health insurance benefit structure and costs
- Review of MSBU and road classification system
- Capitalize on historically low interest rate
 - Review current debt
 - Review capital projects for potential bonding
- Develop plan for 2014 Sales Tax Extension
- Conduct compensation study and develop strategic plan for employee retention
- Explore alternative funding sources
- Explore location and use of CNG facilities within the County

Strategic Focus Area: Growth Management

Goal: Manage growth and change consistent with the County's comprehensive plan to maximize quality of life with an emphasis on efficient processes that support positive business, neighborhood communities, and protect our environmental assets.

Strengths

- Recent updates of Comp Plan and Land Development Regulations (LDRs).
- Strong collaboration between Community Development and Economic Development in working with developers.
- Airport area (ECAP) is available for commercial growth.

Weaknesses

- Impractical development patterns inherited from GDC - 117,000 vacant single family lots, few large parcels and it is difficult to assemble from many owners, shallow commercial lot depth along US 41, lack of connectivity between areas.
- Providing city services at a county wide scale.
- Lack of large employment centers.

Opportunities

- Use flexibility as a tool to incentivize businesses – Transfer of Development Units, consolidation of land, flexible development standards
- Tourism development / eco-tourism.
- Development of Murdock Village.

Threats

- Competition for development from surrounding Counties.
- Short-term thinking – Comprehensive planning is long-term endeavor and requires discipline to implement. Basing decisions on short-term implications could frustrate progress.
- Demand for growth in areas with little or aging infrastructure.

Long-range Issues & Trends

Our large volume of platted lots & ownership patterns will be an on-going issue to deal with; however, defining an identity or vision would help guide sustainable growth patterns and determine where infrastructure is most critical.

Transportation – as the County grows keeping pace with multi modal transportation needs (both for capacity and upkeep) will become a greater challenge.

Within the next 10 years there will likely be development within Murdock Village. The challenge will be assuring there is a cohesive plan for managing the development and infrastructure while not discouraging individual developers. Murdock Village coupled with the development of Babcock Range will change the look and feel of the County.

Immediate Issues and Initiatives

As economy strengthens we will continue to see revived developments and a call for higher levels of code enforcement.

Adherence to updated Comp Plan and Regulations.

Flood zone implementation and flood insurance.

2013/14 BCC Goals or Directives:

- Monitor & support the HCP permit process
- Development of County CRAs
 - Refine the direction and subsequent development of Murdock Village
 - Develop Parkside Revitalization Plan for US41
 - Expansion of Harborwalk in Charlotte Harbor
- Completion and adoption of revised Land Development Regulations
- Develop Stump Pass Management Plan
- Review and recommend action on broad based plan for County's infrastructure
 - Road plan for main arteries – align with concurrency

Citizen Survey Responses

Survey Question	2014	2012	2010	2007	Benchmark
Quality of new development in Charlotte Cour	42%	41%	44%	39%	Lower
Overall built environment	52%				Similar
Traffic flow on major streets	63%				Similar
Land use, planning and zoning	33%	33%	32%	15%	Lower
Code enforcement	33%	28%	27%	22%	Lower

Strategic Focus Area: Public Safety

Goal: Maintain a safe and healthy community in which to live.

Strengths

- High level of knowledge and experience both in staff and leadership.
- Strong relationships between local agencies and with the public.
- Strong focus on customer service.
- Ability to leverage technology and information.

Weaknesses

- Staffing - Budget constraints over the past several years have led to reduced staff with increased workload. In addition, we have an aging workforce with the need for succession plan coupled with the inability to attract and retain younger employees because of uncompetitive salary levels.
- Aging technology and equipment and lack of systems integration.

Opportunities

- Update existing information systems and explore opportunities for systems integration.
- Sales tax projects will increase Sheriff's capacity and flexibility. Additionally, planning and identification of funding for the remainder of the Sheriff's operations, jail and, most immediate, the Justice Center could be occurring now.
- Agencies are actively exploring realignment of staff to better meet current needs.

Threats

- Population growth could overwhelm current service capacity and an already aging infrastructure.
- Lack of support (public and political) for facilities expansion.
- Threat of cyber-attacks and/or data vulnerability is increased by aging technology systems.

Long-range Issues & Trends

Transportation – unless the County's road system is adequately maintained and keeps pace with population growth, traffic congestion will increase, resulting in longer response times, increased accidents and evacuation difficulties. Depending on where development occurs, transportation patterns and service delivery needs could change dramatically.

Public Safety will require significant facilities expansions and upgrades within the next 10 years: Justice Center expansion, Jail expansion, Sheriff headquarter facilities, Fire Station upgrades and expansion in developing areas, security upgrades to public buildings.

Communication and information sharing are critical to public safety. As technology progresses, the methods of communication could change dramatically.

Unless aesthetic and structural improvements take place along the US 41 corridor, it could experience blight and increased crime.

Implementation of the Affordable Health Care Act may adversely impact health care availability.

Immediate Issues and Initiatives

Sales Tax projects - PA25 Radio system, Sheriff west county facility, jail infirmary.

Planning and identification of funding for Justice Center expansion, Sheriff headquarter facility and aging Fire Stations.

Technology – upgrades of existing systems, replacement of Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD), security integration and building automation of public facilities.

Staffing issues – new infirmary facility, rethinking emergency response, court security.

2013/14 BCC Goals or Directives:

- Monitor and adjust for financial impact of final IAFF contract (both to fire assessments and General Fund)
- Long term radio replacement (conversion to P25 or other alternative).
- Because of use of one time savings, Sheriff's budget for 2013/14 will start with \$1.7 million shortfall.
- Continue exploration of usage of volunteer firefighters

Citizen Survey Responses

Survey Question	2014	2012	2010	2007	Benchmark
Overall feeling of safety	81%				Similar
Safety in your neighborhood	94%	93%	92%	88%	Similar
Safety in downtown/commercial areas	87%	84%	84%	78%	Similar
Sheriff	87%	81%	79%	70%	Similar
Fire services	90%	91%	93%	94%	Similar
Ambulance or emergency medical services	92%	89%	92%	90%	Similar
Crime prevention	78%	71%	61%	49%	Similar
Fire prevention and education	75%	76%	72%	70%	Similar
Emergency preparedness	74%	76%	77%		Similar

Strategic Focus Area: Economic Development

Goal: Create a business climate that promotes a diversified, growing economy consistent with established growth management plans and enhanced quality of life.

Strengths

- Have an active Economic Development Department with a reasonable marketing budget.
- Have affordable real estate and taxes.
- Location is advantageous – proximity to airports, between 2 metropolitan markets, geographic diversity, recreational opportunities, low cost of living.

Weaknesses

- There are competing voices within the community and limited consensus of vision, direction or identity.
- Aesthetics of various areas within the county are not conducive to attracting business.
- Lack of high skilled labor force or technology jobs that might attract them.

Opportunities

- Redevelopment of urban corridor, CRAs and waterfront areas.
- Initiate a business incubator site.

Threats

- There will be no community or political consensus of vision, direction or identity.
- Demographics remain unchanged and future growth is retiree based.

Long-range Issues & Trends

There will be significant population growth and if the majority of that growth is retirees we could find ourselves locked even deeper into a service-based economy.

Infrastructure - In key development areas it will be essential to have infrastructure (roads, sewer, water, fiber) in place and well maintained. In 10 years we should see the development of the Punta Gorda Interstate Airport Park and a technology park at Murdock Village.

The potential for the creation of additional municipalities could provide better identity and more focused approach to business development.

Immediate Issues and Initiatives

Redevelopment is at a critical point and if progress is not seen, momentum will be lost.

Western Michigan University aviation, medical and arts programs.

County will experience congestion due to the large volume of construction projects.

Now is the time to plan for infrastructure in Murdock Village, particularly the Business & Technology Park area.

2013/14 BCC Goals or Directives:

- Implement 10 Year Economic Development Plan
- Implementation of incentives and process
- Streamline processes for attracting businesses
- Dedicated team to assist new businesses
- Development of all three CRAs
 - Murdock Village
 - Charlotte Harbor
 - Parkside
- Landscaping Committee proposal for landscaping of County gateways
- Develop strategies for enhancing the aesthetics along 41
- Commitment to tourism as an economic generator
- Marketing Plan – Tie state branding to local initiatives

Citizen Survey Responses

Survey Question	2014	2012	2010	2007	Benchmark
Rating of employment opportunities	21%	13%	11%	13%	Similar
Overall economic health	36%				Lower
Quality of K-12 education	60%				Similar
Adult education	52%				Similar
Overall quality of business establishments in	55%	53%	57%		Similar
Charlotte County as a place to work	36%	33%	24%	29%	Lower
Charlotte County as a place to visit	70%				Similar
Cost of living in Charlotte County	48%				Similar
Overall quality of new development in County	42%	41%	44%	39%	Lower
Overall appearance of Charlotte County	59%	51%	58%	43%	Similar
Overall impression/reputation of Charlotte Co	58%	53%	54%	38%	Similar
Overall built environment	52%				Similar

Strategic Focus Area: Human Services

Goal: Pursue available funding sources to facilitate providing services to meet community needs.

Strengths

- Increase in the quality and quantity of data available for decision making.
- Strong relationships and desire to collaborate between non-profits, government and private sector.
- Strong commitment to provision of comprehensive and accessible customer service.

Weaknesses

- No comprehensive community-wide plan for Human Services.
- Shortage of affordable transportation options for clients.
- Shortage of affordable housing options.
- Shortage of service provision for seniors.

Opportunities

- Opportunity to develop a Human Services Master Plan through the synthesis of studies and plans that already exist: 10 Year Plan on Homelessness, Charlotte County Community Needs Assessment, Community Health Improvement Plan, Transit Development Plan, Community Action Plan, Youth Developmental Assets Study.
- Implementation of fixed-route transit services as detailed in the Transit Development Plan.
- Increased focus on economic development.

Threats

- Health Care issues – increased demand from Baby Boomers, Medicaid rate instability and lack of primary care providers.
- Lack of community consensus on vision and prioritization.
- Predatory landlords and payday lending.

Long-range Issues & Trends

Must have an implemented Human Services Master Plan to ensure coordinated solutions and the most effective use of resources.

Transportation – In a county that is geographically disperse and lacks fixed route transit, transportation will continue to be a problem for low income and other disadvantaged individuals.

Baby boomer population –cost of care for senior citizens will continue to escalate. In addition to increased physical and mental health needs of these seniors there will likely be a shortage of health care professionals (in part due to the Affordable Health Care Act).

Without economic diversity we will face increased poverty. The “working poor” sustained by a service based economy will exacerbate an affordable housing crisis.

Immediate Issues and Initiatives

Development of a Human Service Master Plan is critical to integrating existing plans, coordination of legislative advocacy and collaborative service delivery.

Transportation – Implementation of fixed-route transit services as detailed in the Transit Development Plan.

Development of policies and ordinances that address predatory practices.

Shortage of primary care providers.

2013/14 BCC Goals or Directives:

- Monitor changes in Medicaid funding and requirements at state level
- Monitor impacts of Affordable Health Care Act on service delivery and funding
- Review of Public Health direction, services and funding
- Review of transportation options for low income clients
- Review affordable housing needs and options
- Review of primary health care options in Englewood
- Review of essential human services provided and funding sources

Citizen Survey Responses

Survey Question	2014	2012	2010	2007	Benchmark
Ease of bus travel in Charlotte County	15%	13%	13%	8%	Lower
Rating of bus or transit services	21%	26%	23%	21%	Lower
Availability of affordable quality housing	43%	44%	41%	19%	Similar
Availability of affordable health care	57%	49%	37%	37%	Similar
Availability of affordable mental health care	40%				Similar
Rating of health services	59%	60%	59%	49%	Similar
Affordable childcare / preschool	47%	25%	32%	47%	Similar
Availability of affordable quality food	68%				Similar