



Advancing BCC Focus Area Goals

2013/14 – 2014/15 Budget Process

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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 2013/14 – 2014/15. 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 identical 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 and 34 within the State of Florida. Those results are summarized on page 2.

Employee input: In September of 2012 we asked our employees to evaluate the organization through an on-line survey conducted by *Business and Legal Reports, Inc., and the HR Daily Advisor*. Approximately 61% 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 other entities that participated.

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.

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 or lower than those of other participating communities nation-wide, but were right on par or higher than other Florida communities. In terms of comparison to previous results, this marks the third time Charlotte County has engaged in this survey process: 2007, 2010 and 2012. 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 were essentially a validation of the 2010 results, on almost all of the questions there was statistically no difference from the 2010 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 73% (69% in 2010 and 57% in 2007) of respondents. A majority reported they plan on staying in Charlotte County for the next five years.

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

Residents in Charlotte County were very civically engaged. While only 30% had attended a meeting of local elected public officials or other local public meeting in the previous 12 months, 50% had volunteered their time to some group or activity in Charlotte County, which was much higher than the benchmark.

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 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 28 services for which comparisons were available, four were above the benchmark comparison, 14 were similar to the benchmark comparison and 10 were below. The following page contains a table that details for each service the rating for 2012 compared with 2010, 2007, national benchmark and Florida benchmark. Data that is significant to the BCC Focus Areas is also summarized in those sections.

Service Ratings

Service Provided	2012	2010	2007	National	Florida
Sheriff services	81%	79%	70%	Similar	Above
Fire services	91%	93%	94%	Similar	Similar
Ambulance or emergency medical services	89%	92%	90%	Similar	Similar
Crime prevention	71%	61%	49%	Similar	Above
Fire prevention and education	76%	72%	70%	Similar	Similar
Emergency preparedness	76%	77%		Above	Above
Road repair	48%	45%	37%	Similar	Similar
Bus or transit services	26%	23%	21%	Below	Below
Garbage collection	90%	87%	77%	Above	Above
Recycling	87%	89%	77%	Above	Above
Yard waste pick-up	82%	85%		Above	Above
Storm drainage	55%	50%		Below	Similar
Drinking water	54%	56%		Below	Similar
Sewer services	72%	70%		Similar	Similar
County parks	84%	82%	67%	Similar	Similar
Recreation programs or classes	66%	57%	57%	Below	Similar
Recreation centers or facilities	63%	68%	56%	Below	Similar
Land use, planning and zoning	33%	32%	15%	Below	Below
Code enforcement	28%	27%	22%	Below	Below
Animal control	57%	57%	47%	Similar	Similar
Economic development	25%	32%	26%	Below	Below
Health services	60%	59%	49%	Similar	Similar
Services to seniors	67%	68%	58%	Similar	Above
Services to youth	34%	29%		Below	Below
Services to low-income people	40%	35%	22%	Below	Similar
Public library services	82%	80%	80%	Similar	Similar
Public information services	60%	60%	55%	Similar	Similar
Preservation of natural areas	60%	60%		Similar	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. From these two responses a “satisfaction index” was derived for each statement. This satisfaction index allowed us to identify our strengths and weaknesses and compare ourselves with other organizations that participated.

This is the second time Charlotte County has participated in the survey process and we are able to compare ratings with the 2010 results. As with the citizen survey the results were essentially the same as last time.

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 each of these areas Charlotte County is at the same level or slightly above the other organizations that participated in the survey.

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 was not a huge weakness, the satisfaction index on “I would recommend my organization to friends and family as a good place to work” was only 71% as compared to 84% for other organizations. The good news is that this is the same rating as 2010.

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, 2012 we brought together the subject area experts around each of the BCC Focus Areas. 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 2013/14 – 2014/15 Budget. At the end of each summary there is also a list of the Board's current directional statements and progress made toward them.

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

- Significant improvement in natural filtering from water bodies (more work needed).
- Have National Pollutant Discharge Evaluation permit in place that prescribes education and programming.
- Florida Friendly Landscape guidelines in place.

Weaknesses

- High proliferation of old septic systems.
- Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) issues are still unclear.
- Burnt Store water treatment plant is a stand-alone plant.

Opportunities

- Explore alternative water sources.
- Expand education and outreach to increase public knowledge of environmental issues.
- Basin Area Management Action Plan (BMAP) provides the framework for addressing TMDL standards once they are defined.

Threats

- Mandates – at both Federal and State level, new mandates are routinely passed down.
- There will be an increasing number of septic tank failures.
- Impact of phosphate mining upstream.

Long-range Issues & Trends

Environmental mandates – within the next 5-10 years the County will have to actively manage Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL). In addition, invasion of new exotics will also bring new mandates and/or regulations as it becomes increasingly difficult to predict what the State or Federal Government will do.

Changes at the State level have facilitated a more flexible permitting philosophy – becoming more open to alternative approaches.

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 expand connectivity to water and sewer. A pilot project has already been identified in East/West Spring Lake area with the goal of establishing a model for the rest of the County.

Salt water infiltration will continue to present a hazard to private well owners and may necessitate infrastructure expansion.

There is growing trend for Home Owner Associations to voluntarily seek Florida Friendly Landscape (FFL) certification.

Immediate Issues and Initiatives

Pilot sewer project – construct and assess for sewers within the East/West Spring Lake area.

Unfunded Mandates - impacts to the County include not just the cost of compliance but also the ambiguity of what is mandated, such as TMDL

Develop proactive strategies for dealing with TMDL once a final decision has been reached.

2011/12 BCC Goals or Directives:

- East & West Spring Lake Wastewater Pilot Study
- Environmental Impact Study - phosphate mining
- Proactive strategies for dealing with TMDL
- Develop alternative water sources

Progress Toward Goals:

- East & West Spring Lake MSBU established and study completed
- Environmental Impact Study – advocated concerns, met with Army Core Engineers and held public forums
- For TMDL – adopted Basin Area Management Action Plan (BMAP) for tidal portion of Caloosahatchee River.
- Obtained permit for Babcock well.
- Completed interconnect with Punta Gorda.
- Expanded reclaimed water distribution.

Citizen Survey Responses

Survey Question	2012	2010	2007	National	Florida
Preservation of natural areas	60%	60%	N/A	Similar	Similar
Rating of storm drainage	55%	50%	N/A	Below	Similar
Rating of drinking water	54%	56%	N/A	Below	Similar
Rating of sewer services	72%	70%	N/A	Similar	Similar
Water supply is an important issue in the next 5 years	92%	94%	94%		
Environmental protection is an important issue in the next 5 years	76%	77%	79%		

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.
- Being fiscally conservative has put us ahead of the curve compared to other governments – we made reductions early and have a mindset that looks for efficiency.
- We have a strong emphasis on customer service and citizen input (Open for Business).

Weaknesses

- Budgetary cuts have left us with a low staff to workload ratio.
- Communications can be problematic, especially between departments.
- The “many voices” within the community sometimes cause us to be reactionary.

Opportunities

- Continue to review processes to streamline and automate workflow.
- Constrained resources force us to look at ways we can share.
- Cross training as a way of adding depth and spreading knowledge.

Threats

- Economic recovery and improving job market make it increasingly hard to hire and retain qualified staff.
- Hiring difficulties, union negotiations and static pay will have a negative impact on staff morale.
- Concept of “Open for Business” can be used to mean “Do whatever I want you to”.

Long-range Issues & Trends

The incremental impact of legislation and mandates, such as environmental mandates or implementation of the Affordable Health Care Act, will increasingly drain resources. This will increase the challenge of delivering core services.

Delivery of services – a more educated and technical savvy public will lead to increased demand for on-line information, services and involvement and in a variety of formats.

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).

Technology – the pace of innovation and subsequent obsolescence of technology will continue, making it difficult to project “what’s next”.

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

Immediate Issues and Initiatives

Budgetary cuts over the past several years have left us thinly staffed with little overlap in skills and knowledge. Over the next few years a large number of staff will retire, taking their skills and knowledge with them. As the economy stabilizes and competition for qualified staff increases, finding and retaining employees will be one of our biggest challenges.

For all the reasons stated above, coupled with stagnant wages and union negotiations, employee morale will be an issue.

Due to a variety of factors: unfunded mandates, pent up demand, and the inability to continue cutting, expenditures will outpace revenues.

2011/12 BCC Goals or Directives:

- Define optimal/acceptable levels of service
- Improving overall web presence
- Follow-up on Employee Survey
 - Identifying processes for review
 - Communication
 - Training

Progress Toward Goals:

- Implemented Document Retention Policy
- Redesign of public website
- Developed a county-wide inventory of processes for review
- Automation of processes:
 - Facilities work orders
 - Call tracker for Administration / BCC
 - Project Tracker for long term initiatives
 - Open enrollment
 - Field work in BCS
 - Procurement card process
 - Fixed base meter reading
 - County switchboard
 - Damage review after emergencies
- Implemented energy efficiency initiatives
- Implemented asset replacement schedules
- Biofuel / Methane collection / Composting
- Employee Ambassador program

Citizen Survey Responses

Survey Question	2012	2010	2007	National	Florida
Value of services for the taxes paid to Charlotte County	47%	38%	30%	Similar	Similar
Overall rating of services provided by Charlotte County	64%	61%	44%	Below	Similar
Overall rating of services provided by Federal Government	38%	33%	28%	Similar	Similar
Overall rating of services provided by State Government	42%	37%	39%	Similar	Similar
Overall impression of County employees	79%	80%	69%	Similar	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.
- 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 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.
- Charlotte Harbor CRA and River Walk could provide an inviting entrance to the west side of the Peace River.
- Attract younger population and 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.
- Long term implications of water quality, both in the harbor and inland.

Long-range Issues & Trends

Identity – this is an overarching issue that impacts all of the focus areas. 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.

Education opportunities are necessary to retain a younger population and provide a work force for economic development.

Charlotte County’s ability to hire and retain employees will impact the quality of services delivered to residents.

2011/12 BCC Goals or Directives:

- Citizen Survey
- Vision for Charlotte County

Progress Toward Goals:

- Parkside plan developed and first phase of funding advanced
- Airport area improvements.
- Expansion of sidewalk network
- Numerous road projects
- Acquisition of environmental lands.
- Park improvements / new ball field
- Cultural activities, such as the Vietnam Memorial Wall
- Draft of Habitation Conservation Plan
- Early stages of landscaping plan

Citizen Survey Responses

Survey Question	2012	2010	2007	National	Florida
The overall quality of life in Charlotte County	73%	69%	57%	Below	Similar
Charlotte County as a place to live	80%	78%	64%	Below	Similar
Ease of car travel	66%	66%	47%	Similar	Above
Availability of paths and walking trails	41%	36%	44%	Below	Below
Availability of recreational opportunities	54%	54%	44%	Below	Below
Visited a neighborhood park or County park	80%	86%	81%	Below	Below
Shopping opportunities	47%	60%	60%	Below	Below
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	52%	48%	N/A	Similar	Similar
Educational opportunities	48%	44%	38%	Below	Below
Sense of community	56%	59%	46%	Below	Similar
Charlotte County as a place to raise children	56%	53%	47%	Below	Below
Charlotte County as a place to retire	83%	80%	63%	Above	Above
Overall direction Charlotte County is taking	43%	36%	29%	Below	Below
Road condition is an important issue in the next 5 years	82%	83%	72%		

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 is not in a crisis mode.
- Employee Health Center and Wellness Program have enabled us to cap health benefit costs.
- Local Sales Tax initiatives have enabled us complete infrastructure projects that would have been “out of reach”.

Weaknesses

- Lack of succession planning within the organization.
- Stagnant wages and few advancement opportunities impact employee morale. Staff are discouraged – not disgruntled.
- Deferred or underfunded maintenance can have adverse long term financial impact.
- Limited resources – Though not in a crisis mode, resources are limited (dollars, people, technology) and our maintenance programs are underfunded.

Opportunities

- Succession planning to provide continuity and clarity of direction.
- Second year of 2 year budget allows time to review and improve processes.
- Sale Tax extension in 2014.
- Wellness initiative can reduce costs through early detection and healthier employees.

Threats

- Unfunded mandates by either the state or federal governmental agencies.
- Lack of infrastructure and/or aging infrastructure in many parts of the County.
- Although the housing market appears to be improving there are many economic uncertainties.
- We will face increased competition for recruiting and retaining qualified staff.

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 economy recovers we will face increased competition for qualified staff.

Population & demographics – growth in population without change in demographics will lead to deteriorating infrastructure and lack of diversity in tax base.

Extended economic downturn – we are looking at a long-term recovery and with the lag between business and government, revenues will be flat or of slow growth for several years

Size of local government - will continue to shrink while mandates and demands will increase. Increased mandates include environmental and health care reform implementation. This pressure to balance expectations with limited resources will necessitate an increased reliance on technology and external sources of funding for initiatives and improvements.

Immediate Issues and Initiatives

Development of asset replacement strategies - over the past 2 budget cycles the BCC established replacement programs for technology, vehicles and equipment. Facilities Management will propose a systemized approach to preventative maintenance for buildings in 2014.

Employee issues – a variety of employee related issues need to be addressed that have fiscal implications:

- Negotiation of labor contracts
- Succession planning to be ready for retirements of long-term employees
- Expansion of wellness program and utilization of Health Center
- Employee morale – impacts retention and productivity
- Knowledge gap due to thin staffing

2014 Sales Tax Extension – currently the bulk of road and sidewalk improvements are funded through this revenue source.

Monitor legislation and mandates at both Federal and State level.

2011/12 BCC Goals or Directives:

- Implement records retention
- Stabilize and maintain our internal infrastructure
- Secure health insurance benefit structure and costs
- Monitor pension costs
- Review of MSBU system

Progress Toward Goals:

- Implemented records retention initiative
- Developed asset replacement schedules for vehicles and equipment
- Held health benefit costs flat
 - Moved to self-insured model
 - Expanded employee health center
 - Implemented wellness program and incentives
- Restructured debt to take advantage of interest rates
- Numerous energy initiatives and contracted for energy audit
- Fixed base meters project started to reduce staffing and mileage costs
- Implement water / wastewater modeling tools
- Negotiated waste management contract to secure flat rate
- Developed new revenue sources
 - Bio-solids
 - Methane gas production
 - Process North Port water payments
 - Expanded permit process
 - Line extension program
 - Convenience fees for online bill payment

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

- Transitions at state level allow for greater implementation of vision at local level.
- Strong technical knowledge at staff level.
- Strong focused approach to neighborhood planning.

Weaknesses

- Budget cuts and political climate can adversely affect optimum solutions.
- Perception that staff advice/recommendations are sometimes discounted.
- Existing Land Development Regulations are outdated.

Opportunities

- In this slow permitting time processes can be reviewed and improved.
- Forge relationships with groups in the community.
- Pursue State and Federal grants for CRAs and environmental assets.

Threats

- Community perception – although staff and our Citizen's Survey indicate that majority of residents favor growth and better management of that growth there is a vocal minority opposed to change.
- Short-term thinking – Comprehensive planning is long-term endeavor and requires discipline to implement. Basing decisions on short-term implications could frustrate progress.

Long-range Issues & Trends

Our large volume of platted lots & ownership patterns will be an on-going issue to deal with; however, Smart Charlotte 2050 provides a road map. How successful we are will depend on staying focused on the vision and adhering to the plan despite an often divided populace.

Fiscal constraints – We will likely see an increase in unfunded mandates and regulations. At the same time, there will be continued pressure to reduce fees. The challenge will be maintaining the quantity and quality of services at an acceptable level.

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 while not discouraging individual developers.

Immediate Issues and Initiatives

Refining the direction and subsequent development of Murdock Village.

Completion and adoption of revised Land Development Regulations.

Find our economic niche as a county and stick to it so that we can compete for emerging projects.

2011/12 BCC Goals or Directives:

- Prepare for potential DCA changes - state transfer of responsibilities
- Development plan for the Medical Arts District
- Regulation review
- Review impact fees

Progress Toward Goals:

- Parkside plan developed and first phase of funding advanced
- Updated Land Development Regulations in process.
- Amended sign ordinance
- Amended ECAP Landscaping requirements
- Streamlined processes for fencing easements and release of easement.
- Impact fees suspended – except road fees
- “Green” team established
- Draft of Habitation Conservation Plan
- Worked with multiple potential Murdock Village proposals

Citizen Survey Responses

Survey Question	2012	2010	2007	National	Florida
Quality of new development in Charlotte County	41%	44%	39%	Below	Below
Population growth seen as too fast	14%	23%	56%	Less	Less
Run down buildings, etc. seen as a "major" problem	22%	20%	27%	More	More
Land use, planning and zoning	33%	32%	15%	Below	Below
Code enforcement	28%	27%	22%	Below	Below
Traffic is an important issue in the next 5 years	78%	81%	72%		
Growth management is an important issue in the next 5 years	76%	75%	80%		
Charlotte County is doing a good job to manage growth	45%	41%	23%		

Strategic Focus Area: Public Safety

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

Strengths

- We have a high level of knowledge and experience both in staff and leadership.
- We maintain strong communication between departments and with other local agencies.
- We have maintained good emergency response times.

Weaknesses

- Budget constraints over the past several years have led to reduced staff with increased workload.
- Lacking in communication resources (example: no comprehensive way to issue hazard communication to the public).

Opportunities

- Provide training –technical training to keep skill levels current and leadership to help plan for succession. Build our own training facility to reduce internal training costs and as a potential revenue source.
- Make use of upcoming sales tax renewal to expand infrastructure.

Threats

- Continued budgetary constraints due to volatile economy and potential liabilities.
- If septic systems are not converted to central sewer there could be negative impacts.

Long-range Issues & Trends

Increased demand – as the economy stabilizes and growth returns, service demand will correspondingly grow. Charlotte County already has a significant aged population and that trend will likely continue. This, coupled with health care expansion will impact demand, especially in EMS.

Employee issues – Over the next 5-10 years a number of highly skilled and experienced employees will retire leaving a big knowledge gap both technically and institutionally. In addition, the reduction in training funds hinders our ability to keep skills current and to provide leadership training.

Capacity issues on a number of fronts:

- Hospital intake is already an issue.
- Need a long-term solution to the housing of animals.
- Lack of shelters for emergency evacuations.

Immediate Issues and Initiatives

Affordable Health Care Act implementation will likely impact EMS, both in terms of volume and documentation requirements.

Continue to have contractual issues for the housing of animals.

Impact of labor negotiations on staffing and morale.

Mass communication strategies (example: notification of boil water order).

2011/12 BCC Goals or Directives:

- Implementing Public Safety Fund for Sheriff's budget
- Long-range plan to manage fire assessments
- Safeguard capital infrastructure and equipment and vehicles
- Explore potential usage of volunteer firefighters
- Explore ways to become proactive in education and outreach.

Progress Toward Goals:

- Sheriff's budget and applicable millage rate consolidated in Law Enforcement Fund.
- Fire assessment rates reduced another 10%, sustainable through 2015.
- Reinstated vehicle replacement schedule.
- Explored volunteer firefighter options.
- Implementation of County Ambassador program.
- Increased social media use in Emergency Management and Animal Control.
- Increased public education and added budgetary component to presentations.
- Developed structured communication between Emergency Operation Center (EOC) and Public Information Office (PIO).
- 211 partnership with Fire/EMS.

Citizen Survey Responses

Survey Question	2012	2010	2007	National	Florida
Safety in your neighborhood during the day	93%	92%	88%	Similar	Above
Safety in your neighborhood after dark	77%	78%	71%	Similar	Above
Safety in downtown areas during the day	84%	84%	78%	Below	Similar
Safety in downtown areas during after dark	57%	56%	43%	Similar	Above
Feel safe from property crimes	55%	58%	37%	Below	Above
Feel safe from violent crimes	68%	69%	45%	Below	Similar
Fire services	91%	93%	94%	Similar	Similar
Ambulance or emergency medical services	89%	92%	90%	Similar	Similar
Crime prevention	71%	61%	49%	Similar	Above
Fire prevention and education	76%	72%	70%	Similar	Similar
Crime is an important issue in the next 5 years	92%	90%	90%		

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 Economic Development Strategic Plan and subsequent marketing plan.
- Have available land.
- Location is advantageous – proximity to airports, geographic diversity, recreational opportunities, low cost of living.

Weaknesses

- Although we have a strategic plan there are competing voices within the community and no unified vision.
- Aesthetics of various areas within the county are not conducive to attracting business.
- Limited budget, particularly in regards to marketing.

Opportunities

- The availability of land in Murdock Village and the ECAP could serve as economic engines.
- Lack of vision means we can still define the type of economic development we want to see and explore new markets.

Threats

- A portion of the community is opposed to development and can be adept at lobbying commissioners.
- Competition from other communities with more funding available for incentives.

Long-range Issues & Trends

If the deterioration of county resources such as the quality of the harbor and the aesthetics of our gateways continues, attracting business will be problematic.

Infrastructure - In key development areas it will be essential to have infrastructure (roads, sewer, water, fiber) in place and well maintained.

Without a clear vision or industry focus, we will remain a “retirement community” with no economic engine to provide jobs or community stability.

Immediate Issues and Initiatives

Implementation of the County's Economic Development Plan is critical for setting long term direction.

Funding for incentives, infrastructure improvements and marketing.

Aesthetics of major business areas and gateways.

Commitment to tourism as an economic generator.

2011/12 BCC Goals or Directives:

- 10 year Economic Development plan
- Development of Murdock Village
- Jump start Medical Arts District
- Implementation of incentives and process
- Streamline processes for attracting businesses
- Dedicated team to assist new businesses

Progress Toward Goals:

- Adoption and initial implementation of Economic Development Strategic Plan and marketing strategy.
- Development of Regional Strategic Plan for Southwest Florida.
- Developed Enterprise Zone Strategic Plan.
- Completion of Parkside Plan and funding advanced for initial capital projects.
- Implemented a team approach for fast tracking projects.
- Sale of county land to Cheney Bothers Distribution. Secured funding for road construction.
- Impact fees suspended – except road fees.
- Revised ECAP code.
- Hired a Program Coordinator for film & digital media to attract film industry.
- Worked with multiple potential Murdock Village proposals.
- Multiple sports initiatives and completed new ball field for Snowbird Classic Tournament.
- Worked with Tourism Bureau to adopt an area centric tourism approach.
- In developmental stage of Landscape Initiative.

Citizen Survey Responses

Survey Question	2012	2010	2007	National	Florida
Rating of employment opportunities	13%	11%	13%	Below	Below
Job growth seen as too slow	92%	90%	86%	More	More
Retail growth seen as too slow	52%	48%	32%	More	More
Overall quality of business establishments in County	53%	57%	N/A	Below	Below
Charlotte County as a place to work	33%	24%	29%	Below	Below
Overall quality of new development in County	41%	44%	39%	Below	Below
Overall appearance of Charlotte County	51%	58%	43%	Below	Below
Overall impression/reputation of Charlotte County	53%	54%	38%	Below	Below

Strategic Focus Area: Human Services

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

Charlotte County provides Human Services not only through our internal department but also through contractual agreements with not-for-profit agencies. This year, to capture the insight of those agencies, they were invited to participate in the SWOT analysis. The agencies represented were United Way, Charlotte Behavioral Health Care and Public Health. Each of these agencies prepared their own list of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats prior to the group meeting and participated in prioritizing what the key issues were from a global perspective.

Strengths

- We have experienced, knowledgeable and passionate staff dedicated to making a difference.
- Strong collaboration between non-profits, government and private sector.
- Service provision is proactive and driven by community needs.

Weaknesses

- Shortage of affordable transportation options for clients.
- Reduced flexibility due to mandates and restrictions from funding agencies.
- Difficult to hire and retain quality staff. This has escalated as economy improves.
- Shortage of service provision in Englewood area.

Opportunities

- Pursue increased funding. For example, implementation of Affordable Health Care Act and National Parity Act offer the potential of increasing the number of insured individuals.
- Increased focus on preventative services to reduce the need for future intervention.
- Opportunity to develop a collaborative vision through the synthesis of studies and plans that are in progress: 10 Year Plan on Homelessness, United Way Needs Assessment, Community Health Improvement Plan, Transit Latent Demand Study, Transit Development Plan, Community Action Plan, Youth Development Asset Study.

Threats

- Continued reduction/elimination of state and federal funding.
- Competition for staff from other entities.
- Misconceptions within the community about the scope and impact of not-for-profit services.

Long-range Issues & Trends

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

Baby boomer population –cost of care for senior citizens will continue to escalate.

Next generation of workers are attracted and motivated different than current generation. Our means off attracting and retaining employees will need to adjust accordingly.

Working poor – one of the long term impacts of the economic downturn is projected long-term unemployment, underemployment and a fundamental change in the structure of the workforce that will alter the nature of the clientele that need services.

Mandates from both Federal and State agencies will change the cost and nature of providing services (examples include Affordable Health Care Act and Managed Care).

Immediate Issues and Initiatives

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

Affordable housing – Although property values have dropped dramatically, the cost of rental housing has begun to increase. Service providers are finding that, while the number of households served is not increasing, the size of those households is and many of them are becoming multi-generational.

Federal cuts to entitlements and other funding reductions will require adjustments to service delivery and levels.

Collaboration – the reduction in funding stated above and the completing of the numerous studies being done will necessitate and facilitate greater collaboration among service providers.

2011/12 BCC Goals or Directives:

- Review of 211
- Monitor and define funding direction
- Stabilize transit operations
- Develop sustainable staffing model
- Overview of services and funding
- Review of Public Health budget
- Review of non-profit funding

Progress Toward Goals:

- Realignment of 211 services – cost savings of \$43,000
- Adjustments made for funding changes and mandates (example: Medicaid billing backlog)
- Realignment of Transit operations – cost savings of \$204,000
- Co-location of Human Services Department at Loveland has afforded greater collaboration, efficiencies and cross training.
- Public Health initiatives
 - Reduced County funding by \$170,000
 - Secured new Director
 - Emphasis realigning from primary care to core Public Health services
 - Expansion of services in Englewood
- Charlotte Behavioral Health Center initiatives
 - Reduced County funding by \$100,000
 - Absorbed State budget cuts and increased number served by shifting business model to increase pay from private sources (insurance, individual)
 - Opened Northside Psychiatric Services
- United Way initiatives
 - 6 to 1 leverage of funds with +73,000 clients served
 - Community Needs Assessment in process with focus on Education, Resources and Health
- Human Services involvement in Parkside initiative with establishment of Communities for a Lifetime, Transportation and Housing Committees
- Secured grants and increased services for Criminal Justice and Juvenile Diversion

Citizen Survey Responses

Survey Question	2012	2010	2007	National	Florida
Ease of bus travel in Charlotte County	13%	13%	8%	Below	Below
Rating of bus or transit services	26%	23%	21%	Below	Below
Availability of affordable quality housing	44%	41%	19%	Similar	Similar
Availability of affordable health care	49%	37%	37%	Similar	Similar
Rating of health services	60%	59%	49%	Similar	Similar
Services available to seniors	67%	68%	58%	Similar	Above
Services available to youth	34%	29%	N/A	Below	Below
Services available to low income people	40%	35%	22%	Below	Similar