



ESTERO COUNCIL OF  
COMMUNITY LEADERS

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## CONTENTS

Feature: A is for Achievement.....	2
Development Review Summary May 2018.....	5

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## FEATURE: A IS FOR ACHIEVEMENT

### VILLAGE AND ECCL TEAM UP WITH LEE SCHOOLS, LAUNCHING AN INSPIRING JA PROGRAM



Key stakeholders in the Village of Estero are proving that building a strong community begins with educating and empowering its youngest citizens. Scores of volunteers are rallying around a fired-up, passionate team of Estero council members, school district officials, Junior Achievement leaders, and members of the Estero Council of Community Leaders (ECCL) to define goals and standards that will strengthen the bonds between our community and our schools. Ultimately, their efforts will benefit students, teachers, residents, area businesses, and the entire Village of Estero.

Former Mayor of Estero and current councilman Nicholas Batos reflects on how an ambitious initiative to bridge the community and our schools began with a simple concept.

“The Lee County School District covers a multitude of schools and populations which presents a challenge to get people involved unless they have children in school,” said Mr. Batos. “Up north, where school districts are usually smaller, people feel more connected, recognizing that good schools increase real estate values and stimulate positive results for both residents and businesses. Our core group of like-minded people have joined together to bring this small town effect to Estero, an approach that has long-term potential to serve as a model for other parts of Lee County, and even throughout the state.”

#### **The Plan**

According to Mr. Batos, implementing this overarching concept requires a two-tiered action plan: first, inspire Estero residents to volunteer as ambassadors in area schools by tutoring, mentoring, or supervising a specific project. Second, take a look at our schools to see what resources they need to improve esthetics, building enhancements or academic programming, and then seek ways to fill in the gaps left by a lack of funding.

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Cue in Jim Shields, ECCL Economic Outreach Council member and enthusiastic proponent of Junior Achievement (JA) who is advancing a significant educational opportunity that meshes perfectly with the broader initiative. Working closely with Junior Achievement of Southwest Florida (JASWFL) and the organization’s president Angela Fisher, Mr. Shields, along with other key stakeholders, will implement a pilot program entitled “**2-5-8-GRADUATE**” starting this September. Over the next few months, this unique model of cooperation and collaboration will take shape in all four Estero-area schools: Pinewoods Elementary, Three Oaks Elementary, Three Oaks Middle, and Estero High School.

The program will include JA’s well-developed curriculum for grades two, five, and eight, as well as high school in keeping with JA’s select curriculum:

**2<sup>nd</sup> grade:** basic civics in “*JA Our Community*”

**5<sup>th</sup> grade:** entrepreneurship in “*JA Our Nation*”

**8<sup>th</sup> grade:** connects students and financial literacy, “*JA Economics for Success*”

**High School:** “*JA Career Success*” well-timed as graduates prepare to enter the job market or to further their studies in academia

First, inspire Estero residents to volunteer as ambassadors in area schools by tutoring, mentoring, or supervising a specific projects.

### Unique Collaboration

Working together with Village of Estero, school administrators and teachers, and with a team-teaching volunteer plan developed by ECCL, this sustained journey will help better prepare all Estero-area students in JA’s three core-content competencies: financial literacy, work-readiness, and entrepreneurship.

Lee School Board representative Chris Patricca, another key stakeholder in the pilot program, is enthusiastic about the Village/School collaboration. Recounting her early meetings with Mr. Batos and Mr. Shields, Ms. Patricca says,

“Estero is so unique to Lee County in the number of dedicated volunteers in this community – they really show up in force, and with so much energy and commitment.”

Inspired and motivated by Mr. Shields’ vision, Ms. Patricca looks forward to the next steps from the academic perspective. She explains that the district’s new Chief Academic Officer Dr. Wanda Creel, a former superintendent of schools in the state of Georgia, will map a curriculum for the **2-5-8-GRADUATE** program, a calendared plan that is aligned with Florida standards and encompasses detailed lesson plans for teachers and mentors to follow.

“The potential of the JASWFL program is enormous,” continues Ms. Patricca. “We have kids in our schools who do not have the

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necessary support at home, nor do they have role models from the financial and banking worlds. These volunteers are coming to us with open and full hearts, ready to change kids' lives."

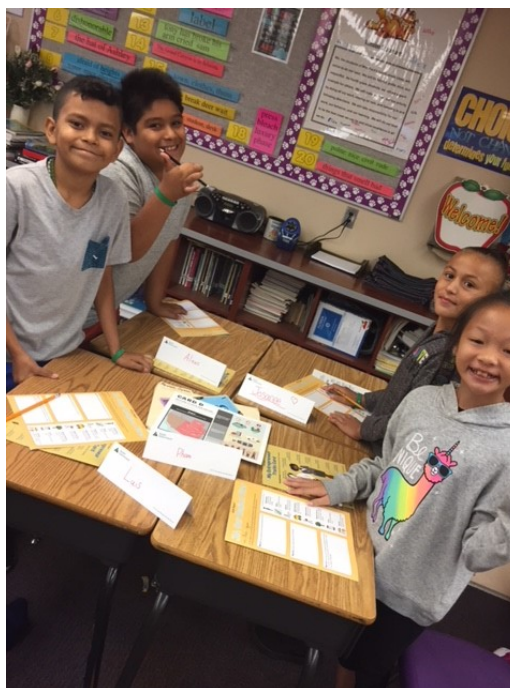
### Implementation

Plans for fall 2018 are right on schedule with volunteer recruitment nearing its goal of 80 Estero Educational Ambassadors. In addition to letters sent to all area financial institutions, Mr. Shields facilitated a meeting on June 6, 2018 comprised of local bankers, educators from Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU), representatives from Lee Health, and the key stakeholders for **2-5-8-GRADUATE**.

"I was quite pleased with the turnout and the session went very well," said Mr. Shields. "Attendance exceeded our expectations, and we have already gotten a great response with highly qualified individuals signing up to volunteer. We are at about 80 percent of our goal. We are fortunate to have the following team of Estero-area cadre of leaders who are helping make this happen: Lisa Mason, Amy Kuchenbecker, and Kenny James as well as Molly Grubbs (on behalf of LEE HEALTH)."

Volunteers are still needed to empower and inspire our local young people. Mentors will be trained, and given a set of lesson

plans compatible with the grade and school to which he or she is assigned.



"As a mentor myself, I can tell you that the energy and excitement from engaging with the students is unmatched. Sharing these lessons is an incredibly rewarding experience," stated Mr. Shields. "JA volunteers have the unique capacity to make school relevant and fun, which means students are more likely to respond to them. As volunteers share their real-world experiences while presenting JA curricula, they help students bridge the gap between what they learn at school and what they can expect in the world of work. There's nothing more fulfilling than watching this process unfold, knowing that community volunteers have the potential to make a meaningful, long lasting impact on students' lives."

To learn more about the Junior Achievement program or to volunteer as an ambassador, contact Jim Shields at [jimshields@fl-office.com](mailto:jimshields@fl-office.com). For more information about the Estero Educational Collaborative Coalition, contact Nicholas Batos at [batos@estero-fl.gov](mailto:batos@estero-fl.gov).

# Development Review Summary May 2018

## Overview

During May the Village contracted for the development of its first “truly Estero” Land Development Code, approved the final zoning for a hotel and the first office building in many years. Meanwhile the Design Review Board (DRB) approved Development Orders for two projects moving them up to the permitting for preparation and construction phase.

### Village Council Actions

May was a busy month for Village Council development review activities. They contracted with Clarion Associates to provide the professional services needed to develop the Village’s initial Land Development Code (LDC) at a cost of \$322,865 over a two year period. In addition they reviewed four (4) sizeable commercial developments including two hotels, one office building and one storage facility.



**Coconut Square Hotel:** On May 2<sup>nd</sup> the Village Council approved the final zoning for a 128 room, 5 story hotel on a 2.6 acre parcel on the southwest corner of Coconut Road and US 41 for developer Com Terra Development subject to the staff recommended conditions and an agreement that the residents of the hotel will not have access to the Pelican Landing beach park and its facilities and no shared use of the Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort recreational facilities.

**Hilton Gardens Hotel in Coconut Point:** On May 9<sup>th</sup> the Village Council conducted the First Hearing on the Zoning Ordinance for a 120 room, 5 story Hilton Gardens Hotel located on a 2.16 acre parcel on the south side of Sweetwater Ranch Boulevard, next to the Estero Fire Rescue station and in front of the Rapallo



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community. Since this was First Reading consideration, there was no public comment and no action taken by the Council.



**Arcos Executive Center:** Also on May 9<sup>th</sup> the Village Council voted to approve zoning for this 66,000 square foot office building, of which 6,000 square feet will be retail space, located on a 3.72 acre parcel in the Plaza Del Sol commercial development on the northeast corner of Three Oaks Parkway and Corkscrew Road.

The zoning contains several quite interesting features:

- Since the large heritage trees on the corner are being preserved the developer sought and received approval for a longer setback and increased building height so the top of the building can be seen over the trees, and
- The lift station on the corner will be relocated to an interior location where it is not such an eyesore.

In addition the Village Council approved vacation of a drainage detention easement for the project.

**University Highlands Self Storage Space Conversion:** On May 16<sup>th</sup> the Village Council considered on First Reading a Zoning application that would convert existing Retail/Office Space for use as a 90,000 square foot, 3 story Self Storage Facility on a 2 acre parcel in University Highlands located on the northwest

corner of Tidewater Key Boulevard and Ben Hill Griffin Parkway. Since this was First Reading consideration no public comment nor Village Council approval was permitted.

### PLANNING & ZONING BOARD (PZB) ACTIONS

The Planning and Zoning Board meeting for May was cancelled. The next PZB meeting is scheduled for June 19<sup>th</sup>.

### DESIGN REVIEW BOARD (DRB) ACTIONS

**Parkside Estero Grande:** On May 9<sup>th</sup> the DRB conducted a Development Order Public Hearing for a 196 unit, four building Parkside multi-family housing project on 13.2 acres of the Estero Grande mixed use development on the west side of the Estero Parkway--US 41 intersection. Amenities include a clubhouse, a pool and covered garages. The DRB approved the application with several conditions that will improve the appearance of the project. The presentation may be viewed [here](#).

**Arcos Executive Center:** See the section above for the description of this project and its location. On May 9<sup>th</sup> the DRB discussed this project at a workshop so no votes were taken. In addition to the features mentioned above the developer has included a meandering elevated boardwalk near the heritage trees and an outdoor patio with 3 tables for pedestrian use. The presentation may be viewed [here](#).

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**Shoppes at University Highlands:** On May 9<sup>th</sup> the DRB also conducted a workshop for the Shoppes of University Highlands project for four retail, restaurant or personal service stores including a Starbucks/Tide Cleaners building located on the west side of Ben Hill Parkway between Everblades Parkway and Miromar Outlet Drive. This was the second time the DRB had reviewed this project. Since the first meeting the developer had upgraded the architectural appearance of the project and met with the residents of the adjacent Grandezza community. The presentation may be viewed [here](#).

**West Bay Club Dog Park and Amenity Center:** On May 23<sup>rd</sup> the DRB approved a limited Development Order for this project with the condition that sound deadening pads be installed on the fence surrounding the pickle ball courts. The 2.3 acre development on vacant land within the West Bay community will include a Dog Park, four pickle ball courts, a bocce ball court, restroom facilities, infrastructure and parking to be constructed over a five year period. The West Bay community is located at the west end of Williams Road. The presentation may be viewed [here](#).



**Phoenix at Estero:** Also on May 23<sup>rd</sup> the DRB approved a Development Order for the construction of a 124 unit assisted living/memory care facility on a 10 acre site on the northeast corner of the Plaza Del Sol development located on the northeast corner of Three Oaks Parkway and Corkscrew Road with the condition that the lighting at the community's crosswalk be further examined by Village staff. The development will include the following amenities: a shuttle bus, a fountain in the lake and several outdoor amenities for the residents, their children and grandchildren.

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