



Estero Development Report

December 2016

Volume 15, Number 2

Produced by the Estero Council of Community Leaders (ECCL)

For more on Estero, visit <http://www.EsteroToday.com>

[ECCL Calendar](#)

[Village of Estero Calendar](#)

CONTENTS

ECCL's Value in the Age of Village Government	1
ECCL Members & Partners.....	2
ECCL Communications.....	2
Lee Health.....	3
Estero Community Improvement Foundation.....	3
Estero High School.....	3
Koreshan State Historic Site.....	4
Village of Estero.....	4
The Continuing Mission.....	4
Timely Access to Healthcare is on the Way	5
Village Review Update: Development Currently under Review	7
ESTERO NORTH POINT.....	7
LEE HEALTH COCONUT POINT.....	7
PARK PLACE OF ESTERO.....	8
UNIVERSITY HIGHLAND.....	8
MED-EXPRESS ESTERO.....	8
COCONUT POINT TRACT 1-A.....	8
Few Residential Permits Issued by Estero in November	9
Estero's Commercial Permits Remain Soft	9
Estero's Single Family Home Sales Increase 18% in November; Decline 3% for the Year	10

ECCL'S VALUE IN THE AGE OF VILLAGE GOVERNMENT

It's not a stretch to say that without the Estero Council of Community Leaders, there would be no Village of Estero. Thirteen years of community advocacy from the ECCL laid the groundwork for the Village's incorporation on Dec. 31, 2014. Today, the ECCL continues to offer vital support to the evolving Village through the ECCL's extensive communications network and members' collective knowledge on a number of issues facing the community.

“The value of the ECCL is so long,” Village Councilman Jim Boesch said. “Each day we spend time at the Council, we have to look back at the ECCL and the standards they set. We are continuing the good success of the ECCL.”

Esteros slogan, “Village with a Vision,” was established by the ECCL long before incorporation, and Boesch credits ECCL founders Neal Noethlich and Don Eslick with honing that vision for a community with an exceptional quality of life.



Through the years, the ECCL has conducted extensive research and lobbied to improve community planning, transportation, environmental protection, healthcare and more. That work continues as the ECCL embraces its support role for the Village — particularly vital when the Village is constrained by Sunshine Laws and jurisdictional boundary lines.

“I think their new role is really helpful,” Village Councilman Howard Levitan said. “They have positioned themselves to deal with issues we don’t have the power to deal with, like the DR/GR (Density Reduction/Groundwater Resource area), which is outside our jurisdiction.”

Recently, the ECCL joined eight other organizations — including the Conservancy of Southwest Florida, Audubon, Florida Wildlife Federation and several east Corkscrew Road communities — in issuing a Joint Statement disputing the methodology and findings of a 2016 mining study commissioned by Lee County. The study used total population, rather than population growth, as the basis for its finding that new mines will be needed in the county by 2040. To date, two new mines have been proposed in the Density Reduction/Groundwater Resource DR/GR east of Esteros boundaries. Development in this area greatly affects Esteros watershed, its rivers and streams, the Estero River, Halfway Creek and Spring Creek and Estero Bay.

While the DR/GR is beyond the Villages boundaries, the Village recently contracted with J.R. Evans Engineering to develop a Stormwater Master Plan for Esteros. This plan will examine how water flows from the east into the Villages watersheds, identify flooding issues and deficiencies in conveyance, and prioritize water projects for the Village for the years ahead.

“Particularly in working on county and stormwater issues, Don Eslick and the ECCL have been very helpful in making contacts and helping us understand the background on some very complex issues,” said Village Manager Steve Sarkozy.

ECCL MEMBERS & PARTNERS

The ECCL continues to tackle an array of quality of life issues on behalf of Esteros citizens. Each month, ECCL committees meet to address new developments in transportation, community development and the environment. Monthly membership meetings are attended by representatives from more than 30 Esteros communities. The ECCL membership also includes several civic organizations like Esteros Chamber of Commerce, Esteros Historical Society, Esteros Rotary Club, College of Life Foundation, Happehatchee Center and Friends of South County Regional Library.

ECCL COMMUNICATIONS

The ECCL reaches about 3,800 households with frequent email communications. It continues to expand its reach through social media and an expanding user base. ECCL communications will activate and engage over 12,000 households in 2017. ECCL communications include:

- Monthly ECCL Report
- Monthly Esteros Development Report
- Development Review notices
- ECCL meeting notices

- Monthly calendar of community events
- Community Organization Support
- Village Support messages

Since the Village’s incorporation, the ECCL has sent out more than 200 emails to this extensive list of Estero residents, averaging about 11 messages per month. This massive communications engine continues to be of value to community organizations seeking to inform and involve Estero citizens.

LEE HEALTH

Lee Health’s partnership with ECCL goes back long before there was a Village of Estero, when Lee Memorial first purchased land at Coconut Point in the early 2000s. The two organizations shared disappointment when Lee Memorial was denied state approval to build a new hospital in Estero, but the disappointment was soon replaced with excitement as plans emerged for an innovative healthcare destination which will include a 24/7 emergency department, along with a surgery center, Continuum Care unit and outpatient services.

“Together, we worked on Plan B, and out of that loss, I think we created something that might be even better than a hospital,” said Suzanne Bradach, project manager for Lee Health Coconut Point.



As plans have come into focus, Lee Health has gained valuable feedback from ECCL members along the way, Bradach said. The ECCL continues to send out regular email updates from Lee Health to keep the community informed.

“The partnership has been extremely important to us because it enables us to connect in a way we never would be able to otherwise to reach thousands of members of the community through the ECCL communications engine,” Bradach said.

ESTERO COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT FOUNDATION

The Estero Community Improvement Foundation (ECIF), which branched off from the ECCL as an independent foundation three years ago, recently contracted with Florida Gulf Coast University to conduct a Needs Assessment Study for Estero. The foundation turned to the ECCL for help in getting an electronic survey out to Estero residents who were up north for the summer, noted ECIF Chairman Wayne Smith. The ECCL also helped organize focus groups, he added.

ESTERO HIGH SCHOOL

Estero High School’s Culinary program is another benefactor of the ECCL’s connections. A highly successful dinner fundraiser at Shadow



Wood Country Club Dec. 19 brought in thousands of dollars for the culinary program. It all started with a meeting orchestrated by ECCL member Lena Boles. She connected Chef Educator Jeremy Jasper with Don Eslick and Mayor Nick Batos, and the three brainstormed a gala where culinary students would prepare a meal for 220 guests, representing a “who’s who” of Estero.

“My biggest supporters have been the ECCL,” Jasper said. “Without them, this dinner would never have come to fruition.”

KORESHAN STATE HISTORIC SITE

Koreshan State Historic Site Manager Rick Argo also says he is indebted to the ECCL. He transferred to the park in 2015 and was amazed when the ECCL offered to help promote park events.

“I appreciated it very much,” Argo said. “The knowledge the senior leaders of the ECCL have of this area is phenomenal and has been a help for us in trying to integrate with the Village.”

VILLAGE OF ESTERO

Mayor Batos acknowledges the gratitude the Village owes to the ECCL, as a grassroots organization which has been operating in Estero for the last 15 years.

“The ECCL has been, and still is, a way that residents can gather and become informed of what is occurring in and around Estero and then work together to advocate for what they feel is best for them,” Batos said.

Councilman Bill Ribble called ECCL “the horsepower behind the community.” He noted the ECCL’s Speakers Panel is particularly helpful in educating citizens so they feel confident in voicing opinions regarding action items at Village Council meetings.

THE CONTINUING MISSION

The ECCL’s continuing mission is to help the Estero community to be informed and involved in Village, County, regional and State issues of impact. The ECCL’s network of communities work together as the “voice of the people” to advocate for positive change.

The following **8 Core Benefits** continue to offer value to ECCL members:

- **Forum for our Membership in Estero:** We provide a forum for our membership to bring their “outside the gates” problems and concerns for resolution and support.
- **Clearinghouse for Ideas:** Our monthly meetings act as a “Clearinghouse for Ideas” where people from all areas of the community can freely discuss each idea or suggestion.
- **Knowledge and Experience:** Our leadership and membership has extensive knowledge and many years of experience in researching and solving a wide variety of community and governmental problems.
- **Public Information:** We have a very strong commitment to helping our member communities and their residents to be fully informed about all the issues that are likely to impact their quality of life in Estero.
- **Strength in Numbers:** We strongly believe in “strength in numbers.” We are only as strong as the number of our members we can mobilize in support of our positions.
- **Communication Capabilities:** We continually strive to improve and expand our communications capabilities with the 40,000 residents of Estero directly using our resources and indirectly through the capabilities of our community members.

- **Shared Communication Support:** We add strength by providing communication services to other community organizations seeking to various opportunities or services for the residents of Estero.
- **Enhancement Through Collaboration:** We believe we can better serve the citizens of Estero by collaborating with other organizations and groups that share our concerns.



TIMELY ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE IS ON THE WAY

Since the very first days, when Estero residents and others in south Lee County need health care, they have to put up with longer than normal EMS response times, long trips to hospitals and emergency rooms, long waits once there and other delays, some of which negatively affect a patient’s health and welfare while undergoing a health care event. That’s about to change for the better.

Thanks to the efforts of an AdHoc group known as the South Lee County Hospital Committee and the Lee Health System, timely access to health care is going to become a reality. The non-profit Lee Health System has stepped up to the need and will shortly begin site preparation for the 31 acre Lee Health Village at Coconut Point located immediately south of the Dillard’s department store.

The Village is a \$140 million investment in timely and high quality healthcare for the residents of and visitors to south Lee County. The 163,500 square feet of construction will include a 24/7 Emergency Room, a 25,000 square foot surgery center, a patient evaluation unit, imaging center, laboratory, pathology, diagnostic breast health center, diagnostic cardiology suite, cardiac rehabilitation center, sports medicine clinic, multi-specialty physicians’ offices and an EMS station with air transport accessibility.

The highly regarded Lee Healthy Life center, currently located at the Coconut Point Mall, will relocate to the Village campus. It provides health guidance, services and education to inspire healthier life styles. It is dedicated to maintaining and improving health.

The Lee Health Village at Coconut Point is described as healthcare of the future because it provides for local, rapid response to the vast majority of health care needs while reserving large tertiary care hospitals for very sick patients. The estimate is that 85% of the people who would otherwise go to an existing hospital or emergency room, the closest of which is 11 miles away, will be able to receive care at the Health Care Village and return home without hassle or delay. Many significant hospital procedures involve short stays such that for example, joint

replacements and hysterectomies will be performed at the Village. Most of the remaining 15% are very sick and need specialized care.

Lee County EMS will have a permanent station at the Village, and response time will improve by 3-5 minutes. The Village will be technologically connected to the entire Lee Health system of 4 hospitals and numerous multi-specialty clinics. It will employ the latest technologies in telemedicine, diagnostic imaging, virtual integration and clinical record interoperability with major organizations throughout the country through the Epic system. Epic members include Harvard, Mayo Clinic, Cleveland Clinic, Duke, University of Michigan Health, University of Chicago, Cedars Sinai, University of Pennsylvania Health System, Yale New Haven Hospital and Weil Cornell Medical College to name just a few of the many prestigious health care facilities that the Village can connect to.

The patient experience will be enhanced by the Village's guiding principles:

- One patient, one record utilizing EPIC as the foundation,
- Incorporate telemedicine into the care delivery system,
- Single registration process for all services, and
- Use technology to enhance patient and family engagement, communications, and to streamline interactions - before, during and after the patient visit.

The multi-specialty medical office complex will include primary care, pediatrics, OB-GYN, general and vascular surgery, orthopedics, cardiology, gastroenterology, pulmonary, endocrinology and rheumatology. It will be open 7 days per week to maximize access.

The village's design reinforces the destination concept of "one stop shop" by co-locating all physicians in one practice setting which enhances communication and collaboration. The medical offices will have on campus access to ancillary services and convenient testing. The patient experience will be enhanced by ease of registration/check in and check out. In short, the center is designed with the patient in mind and is simply a breath of fresh air.

During the planning and design phases that have been going on for 14 months, several residents of Estero communities participated in focus groups along with Lee Health professionals, the purpose being to make the patient experience the best that it can be. Many new, more patient friendly processes were developed and are being built into the Center.

When will all of this happen? At its November Board meeting, the Lee Health Board approved a \$5 million draw to commence site preparation which will begin shortly after the New Year. It involves raising the elevation of the site by 6 feet since the Center is being built to hospital specifications and must sit above the flood plain. That will take 9000 truck trips, and at 75 trips per day, the fill work will take 120 days. After that, actual construction begins and will last 14 months. Two months for staff orientation, training and testing, and the opening is scheduled to occur in October, 2018. Below is a link to the actual presentation to the Lee Board which shows several renderings of what the Village will look like.

<http://esterotoday.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Lee-Health-Coconut-Point-Board-Presentation-11-17-16-update.pdf>

The Lee Health System is betting \$140 million dollars that it can improve health in south Lee County, and all south Lee County residents including everyone at West Bay Club can sleep a little better at night knowing that Lee Health will be nearby with Caring People - Inspiring Health.

submitted by:

Scotty Wood
South Lee County Hospital Committee and West Bay resident

VILLAGE REVIEW UPDATE: DEVELOPMENT CURRENTLY UNDER REVIEW

Plans for a 100-acre mixed use development within the Village Center are taking shape as **Estero North Point** moves through the design review process. Meanwhile, specifics of Lee Health's facility at Coconut Point are also coming into focus.

As the Village continues to experience economic growth, Estero citizens are invited to attend a **Comprehensive Plan Workshop on Jan. 11**. The Village of Estero Comprehensive Plan will serve as a roadmap for planned growth for the next 5, 10 and 20 years. The plan will prioritize future roadway projects, natural resources initiatives and parks and recreation needs among other topics. It is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2017.

Mark your calendar for this important community meeting at Legacy Church, 21115 Parc Lane, on Wed., Jan. 11, at 5:30 p.m.

The next Design Review Board meeting will be Tuesday, Jan. 10, at 5:30 p.m.

The next Planning and Zoning Board meeting will be Tuesday, Jan. 17, at 9:30 a.m.

The following is a recap of developer presentations to the Estero Design Review Board and the Planning & Zoning Board within the last month.

ESTERO NORTH POINT

This is a 100-acre, mixed use development planned for the northeast corner of U.S. 41 and Williams Road, directly north of Hertz. It consists of two parcels, bisected by Via Coconut Point and is within Estero's designated Village Center. Zoning was previously approved by Lee County for uses including 550,000 square feet of retail, 120,000 square feet of office space, 150 hotel rooms and 150 multifamily units. The main entrance to this development is proposed for U.S. 41 at Pelican Sound Drive, where a future traffic signal is planned. Three additional access points are planned, including a second on U.S. 41, one on Williams Road and one on Via Coconut Point. The proposed design also includes a north-south interior roadway through the development, which would include a 10-foot, bike/pedestrian pathway. The consultant, Peninsula Engineering, made a Preliminary Information Meeting (PIM) presentation to the Design Review Board (DRB) on Dec. 14. Several Estero residents suggested that the internal east-west roadway directed toward the western entrance of the Estero Community Park should be an integral part of the plan and that the exotics should be tentatively suggested by the developer should immediately be removed and replaced by the final perimeter landscaping for the development, as was done at Coconut Point. A link to the developer's presentation may be found [here](#). Since this was a Preliminary Information Meeting (PIM) this development will come back to the DRB for final action after the Village Staff has completed their report on the proposal.

LEE HEALTH COCONUT POINT

The Design Review Board approved Lee Health's plan for its future Healthcare Village directly south of Coconut Point Mall, paving the way for site preparation starting next month and building construction beginning in June 2017. The design includes a 146,545-square-foot medical facility — that will provide a wide variety of healthcare services, a diagnostic unit, and a 24/7 emergency department — as well as a 12,872-square-foot energy pavilion, a future development area, landscaping, parking and related infrastructure. The board suggested Lee Health

consider expanding a pedestrian connection to the Bonita Community Health Center, which Lee Health owns jointly with NCH Healthcare System. The new Lee Health Coconut Point facility will provide 24-hour/365-days-a-year emergency services. Lee County EMS will be stationed onsite, reducing call times for emergency transport. The Healthy Life Center currently at Coconut Point Mall will move to the new facility and expand its wellness programs with a demonstration kitchen and outdoor exercise area. Site work is expected to begin in January. Lee Health's presentations to the Design Review Board may be accessed [here](#).

PARK PLACE OF ESTERO

This is a small gated community planned off of River Ranch Road north of Estero High School. The developer is seeking to reduce the number of planned lots from 26 to 16 single family residences. Park Place would facilitate pedestrian connectivity with a sidewalk from the development to the existing sidewalk on Block Lane, which leads to River Ranch Road and Estero High School. The developer's presentation to the Design Review Board may be found [here](#). Since this was a Preliminary Information Meeting (PIM) this development will come back to the DRB for final action after the Village Staff has completed their report on the proposal.

UNIVERSITY HIGHLAND

The developer is proposing site work and temporary landscaping on two small parcels of land along Ben Hill Griffin Road presently planned for future development. These are out-parcels of the Springs at Gulf Coast apartments and Tidewater, which are currently under construction. Site work would include clearing of invasive vegetation and installation of temporary pedestrian seating to give a park-like feel along the sidewalk. Since this was a Preliminary Information Meeting (PIM) this development will come back to the DRB for final action after the Village Staff has completed their report on the proposal.

MED-EXPRESS ESTERO

Med-Express Estero has moved the location for its planned 5,000-square-foot facility. It is no longer part of the Estero Town Center development planned north of Walmart, which includes an Aldi grocery store. Med-Express' new location is at the northeast corner of U.S. 41 and Estero Parkway on an outlot on the Walmart property. The Med-Express plans include decorative pavement and pedestrian connections to the bus stop and sidewalk at the front of the store. A link to the design presentation may be found [here](#). Since this was a Preliminary Information Meeting (PIM) this development will come back to the DRB for final action after the Village Staff has completed their report on the proposal.

COCONUT POINT TRACT 1-A

The Planning and Zoning Board (PZB) voted to recommend Village Council deny an application for 200 apartments to be built in four buildings on less than seven acres at the southeast corner of Williams Road and Via Coconut Point. The property is located on the far northeast corner of the 482 acre Coconut Point development of regional impact (DRI). Village staff recommended denial of a zoning change from 200 assisted living units (beds) to 200 apartment units, which would be much higher density than any other property in Estero. Eight Estero residents spoke against this project, and members of the board received 147 emails opposing the apartments. The developer's presentation and the staff report may be found [here](#).



FEW RESIDENTIAL PERMITS ISSUED BY ESTERO IN NOVEMBER

During November, 2016, nine (9) residential permits were issued in Estero. The permits, all for single family units, were spread among three developments, Estero Place, Pebble Pointe and West Bay. The total value of all residential permits issued in the Village during the month was \$3,583,316, making November one of the slowest months of this year.

So far this year, one hundred fifty-four (154) housing units have been permitted in Estero. Although no permits were issued this month to Tidewater, it constitutes over 60% of this year's permits. This large, single family development is under construction at Estero Parkway and Ben Hill Griffin.

The table below compares 2016 year-to-date figures with those of the previous 16 years.

Year	Year-to-Date Housing Units	Building Value	Average Building Value Per Unit	Percentage of Single Family Units
2000	1,956	\$274,917,477	\$140,551	42%
2001	2,070	318,309,650	153,773	47
2002	1,418	265,574,765	187,288	50
2003	1,365	219,137,397	160,540	46
2004	1,485	328,019,837	220,889	62
2005	2,699	600,971,677	222,665	47
2006	1,268	330,712,219	260,814	39
2007	428	121,212,530	283,207	37
2008	144	49,233,767	341,901	81
2009	150	50,415,736	336,105	77
2010	177	36,167,371	204,335	80
2011	179	36,388,729	203,289	83
2012	304	53,633,486	176,426	74
2013	431	74,766,411	173,472	74
2014	328	59,258,574	180,666	67
2015	547	67,461,066	123,329	18
2016	154	48,597,349	315,567	68

Note: The building values above exclude the value of the underlying land.

Sources:

For 2016, see Village of Estero Community Development: <https://estero-fl.gov/wp-content/uploads/library/Community%20Development%20Applications/Building%20Permit%20Applications/Building%20Permit%20Reports/Village%20of%20Estero%20Building%20Permit%20Report%20%28October%201st%20through%20October%2031st%2C%202016%29.pdf>

For prior years, see Lee County Permit Reports for the "Village of Estero": <http://www.leegov.com/dcd/reports>

ESTERO'S COMMERCIAL PERMITS REMAIN SOFT

The value of commercial permits in Estero in November, 2016 totaled \$1,019,212. No permits for new construction of significant dollar value have been issued since April, 2016. This year, the only significant dollar value permit was for \$14.9 million issued for the Marriott Hotel on Via Coconut Point and Coconut Rd.

The table below compares 2016 year-to-date figures with those of the previous 16 years.

Year	Year-to-Date	Annual Total
2000	\$76,434,302	\$77,250,835
2001	37,087,252	44,116,526
2002	23,095,139	23,135,139
2003	19,057,328	23,234,725
2004	59,806,230	60,859,820
2005	82,721,406	111,037,977
2006	180,995,072	184,709,240
2007	155,487,478	157,614,045
2008	38,765,644	39,261,677
2009	9,545,879	9,752,556
2010	8,836,508	9,322,546
2011	11,670,078	11,717,593
2012	11,558,546	11,879,291
2013	14,458,248	14,656,213
2014	137,149,005	139,285,611
2015	69,914,537	68,338,852
2016	36,027,252	N/A

Note: The building values above exclude the value of the underlying land.

Sources:

For 2016, see Village of Estero Community Development: <https://estero-fl.gov/wp-content/uploads/library/Community%20Development%20Applications/Building%20Permit%20Applications/Building%20Permit%20Reports/Village%20of%20Estero%20Building%20Permit%20Report%20%28October%201st%20through%20October%2031st%2C%202016%29.pdf>

For prior years, see Lee County Permit Reports for the “Village of Estero”: <http://www.leegov.com/dcd/reports>

ESTERO’S SINGLE FAMILY HOME SALES INCREASE 18% IN NOVEMBER; DECLINE 3% FOR THE YEAR

In November, 2016, the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) recorded thirty-nine (39) single family home sales in the Village of Estero. This represents an 18% increase from October and November, 2015. For the year, sales are off 3% from 2015.

Sales figures are shown below:

Period	2014	2015	2016	Inc (Dec)	Inc (Dec) %
Jan	29	34	46	12	35
Feb	33	35	39	4	11
Mar	25	65	54	-9	-17
Qtr 1	87	134	139	5	4
Apr	47	69	67	-2	-3
May	49	71	47	-24	-34
June	51	63	66	3	5
Qtr 2	147	203	180	-23	-11
July	33	51	42	-9	-17
Aug	31	36	57	21	58
Sept	33	44	35	-9	-20
Qtr 3	97	131	134	3	-2
Oct	38	41	33	-8	-19
Nov	35	33	39	6	18
Dec	43	53			
Qtr 4	116	127			
Yearly Totals	447	595			
Year-to-Date	404	542	525	-17	-5

As of November 30, 2016, there were 438 listings of currently active unsold homes (i.e. “inventory”). This level equates to about a 9 month supply. Both the inventory level and the months of supply figure increased about 25% in November.

Pending sales at November totaled 91 homes, which approximates last November’s level and is up 40% in the past month. The increase in the number of pending sales, coupled with the inventory increase, could suggest higher sales in December.

Distressed sales this year have totaled only 4% of sales, while distressed sales in inventory remain at only 1%. These percentages remain at their lowest levels since 2012.

Continued thanks to Joe Pavich, Sr. of Realty World in Estero for supplying us monthly sales and inventory figures.

Notes: 1) “Distressed sales” include short-sales and sales of bank owned property in which the bank receives less than their loan amount.

2) Figures include homes in the new Village of Estero (excluding homes in the Estero portion of Pelican Landing, which are not separately shown in the MLS). Also not included are figures for multi-family homes.