

Estero Development Report  
 Volume 10, Number 4, Issued November 2010  
 Produced by the Estero Council of Community Leaders (ECCL)  
**For More Information about Estero**  
 ...see [www.esterofl.org](http://www.esterofl.org)

**December Opportunities for Citizen Participation  
 in Protecting Estero's Quality of Life**

Date	Time	Event	Location
<b>Tuesday, December 7<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>9 a.m.</b>	<b>Troyer Brothers Mine Hearing before the Lee County Hearing Examiner (4<sup>th</sup> day)</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Hearing Room, 1500 Monroe Street in downtown Ft Myers</b>
<b>Wednesday, December 8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to Approve the 2035 Fiscally Feasible Plan</b>	<b>Cape Coral City Hall</b>
Wednesday, December 8 <sup>th</sup>	5 p.m.	Estero Design Review Committee (EDRC)	Estero Community Park
Tuesday, December 14 <sup>th</sup>	6:00 p.m.	Estero Fire Rescue Meeting	Estero Fire Rescue Headquarters
Wednesday, December 15 <sup>th</sup>	9 a.m.	Lee County Legislative Delegation Meeting	Taeni Hall (Room S-117) at Edison College in Ft. Myers
Friday, December 17 <sup>th</sup>	1 p.m.	Estero Council of Community Leaders (ECCL)	Estero Community Park
Monday, December 20 <sup>th</sup>	6 p.m.	Estero Community Planning Panel (ECP)	Estero Community Park

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**Estero Community Website**

**The community groups sponsoring the site are:**

- Estero Community Planning Panel (ECP)
- Estero Community Association (ECA)
- Estero Design Review Committee (EDRC)
- Estero Council of Community Leaders (ECCL)

## **Estero Parkway Wal-Mart Zoning Presentations Go Well**

On November 22<sup>nd</sup> Wal-Mart's development team made presentations to the residents of The Vines and other communities surrounding the site and later to the Estero Community Planning Panel (ECPP). A summary of the ECPP meeting, which about 100 Estero residents attended, follows:

Jeff Satfield of CPH Engineers assisted by Jim Winter and Theresa Murphy presented the revised Wal-Mart plans. Satfield indicated that Wal-Mart seeks to rezone its 33-acre site on the northeast corner of U.S. 41 and Estero Parkway to allow a 155,000 square-foot-store, down from 228,000, and to increase the number of outlots on U.S. 41 from one to four. The 24-hour store would sell groceries, general merchandise, drugs store goods and garden supplies but would no long contain a Tire & Lube facility.

His presentation was followed by comments from the panel members. In general they were pleased with the appearance of the building. Their greatest concern was with the uses that would be approved for the four outlots. They indicated that they would rather see offices or banks and not high-traffic generators like fast food restaurants on the out-parcels. They asked the developer, and the developer agreed, to prepare a list of outparcel uses to be submitted to the Panel for future review and comment.

One of the members indicated that he would like bike paths on the property. Satfield replied that bike paths could be added to the walkways by widening them to 10 feet.

The Panel also raised questions about the roadway interconnects to the north and east, the access roads on US41 and Estero Parkway, signage, internal access to the outparcels from Estero Parkway, and roof noise. Concern was expressed that the middle entrance off Estero Parkway may be too short a distance from US 41 (660') to operate safely as a full access.

The developer provided the following information: there will be monument signs at each entrance; additional berms and walls and moving the refrigeration compressors to the roof should provide additional noise reduction.

**Audience suggestions** –Public had more questions than comments but a representative of The Vines indicated that The Vines community was strongly opposed to any interconnection that routed traffic to the Vines entrance. Other public comments indicted that they too opposed too many drive throughs and fast-food stores in the outlots.

This meeting constitutes the formal meeting in the Estero community that each developer is required to hold prior to filing his rezoning application with the County. The developer has to submit a detailed report on the meeting to the County that must include a summary of the comments and suggestions made by the community.

### **Looking Ahead**

Now the developer will submit the rezoning proposal to Lee County where the following steps are necessary for approval of the rezoning:

- The proposal will be reviewed by the County's Community Development staff and a staff report will be prepared and sent to a County Hearing Examiner with copies available to the public,
- The Hearing Examiner conducts a public hearing on the application and prepares a report based on the hearings that includes a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). The public is invited to testify at this Hearing,
- Finally, the BOCC conducts a hearing on the matter and votes to approve, deny or approve with conditions, the application. Only persons who testify before the Hearing Examiner may testify before the BOCC.

### **Earlier Activities/Background**

These meetings follow three informal meetings between Wal-Mart's consultants and contractual architect to discuss how the existing zoning might be modified for the smaller store that is now Wal-Mart's national standard model and still satisfy Estero's unique appearance standards.

On June 17th many members of the Estero Community Planning Panel (ECPP) and the Estero Design Review Committee (EDRC) met with [Wal-Mart](#)'s project architect and engineer to react to their effort to redesign Wal-Mart's corporate design for its new 155,000 square foot store in order to satisfy Estero's unique appearance and big-box standards. The Estero participants appreciated that Wal-Mart's proposal was a great improvement over the standard store but made numerous suggestions for further improvement.

At the conclusion of the meeting Wal-Mart representatives indicated that they would now have to go back to the drawing boards and consult with the Wal-Mart's corporate architects to gain their approval before returning in a couple of months

On May 24th several members of the Estero Community Planning Panel (ECPP) and the Estero Design Review Committee (EDRC) met with [Wal-Mart](#)'s project architect and engineer to discuss how Lee County and Estero Comprehensive Plans and Land Development Code provisions should be used to modify Wal-Mart's new, smaller store plans. The meeting produced a lively discussion and many good ideas that Wal-Mart's architect will incorporate into two draft proposals that will be discussed at a second meeting between these parties, probably sometime in late June. The next steps in the process will be as outlined below.

On April 20th representatives of the Estero Community Planning Panel (ECPP) and the Estero Council of Community Leaders (ECCL) met with representatives of Wal-Mart to learn about their plans for the Wal-Mart store zoned for the northeast corner of US 41 and Estero Parkway in 2003. Wal-Mart has not constructed this store because their zoning prevents them from starting

construction until six-laning of the segment of US 41 adjacent to the store has begun. The US 41 widening project is expected to start later this year, in November or December.

The stores representatives indicated at this meeting that Wal-Mart's corporate leadership has approved a new, smaller store format for development throughout the country. All their new stores will be much smaller than in the past. They are seeking to rezone this site for a 155,000 square foot store instead of the currently zoned 228,000 square foot store. In addition they would like to add three out-lots to the site plan, using some, but not all, of the surplus space included in the present zoning. The present plan includes one out-lot on the corner of Estero Parkway and US 41. The standard design of their new stores varies greatly from the Mediterranean design approved by the County for this site, however they agreed that the corporate design would have to be substantially modified in order to comply with Estero's appearance standards imbedded in Chapter 33 of the Lee County Land Development Code.

### **130 Estero Residents Participate in the Community Planning Workshop**

#### **Overview**

It has been ten years since the Estero Community launched its community planning effort, eight years since the existing Plan was adopted by the County Board and five years since the Board last updated the Estero Chapter of the County Land Development Code.

Since then the Estero Community Planning Panel (ECP) has been intensively involved with the zoning of a large number of developments that include most of the land along the US 41 and Corkscrew Road commercial corridors. In addition the Estero Design Review Committee (EDRC) has influenced the architecture, site plan, landscape and appearance of scores of projects located in these developments.

Meanwhile Estero has tripled in population and property used for commercial purposes has increased fourfold from less than 1,000,000 square feet to 4,500,000 square feet in spite of the sluggish market that has persisted for the last four years.

This economic slowdown presents the ECP and the community with an outstanding opportunity to review and update our Community Plan and the Land Development Code provisions specific to Estero.

#### **During November**

The first major step in the Community Plan renewal process was a large Community Planning Workshop held by the ECP at the Hyatt Coconut Point Resort and Spa on Saturday, November 13<sup>th</sup>. The Workshop began with brief presentations on:

- how the Community Plan has been implemented since it was adopted in 2002,
- how the Estero Community has grown during the past decade, and

- how the meeting was to be conducted in order to gather community input.

Then the participants were organized at 12 tables of 10 or so participants including a moderator and scribe. Each moderator was armed with a list of community planning topics intended to stimulate discussion at each table. After more than two hours of discussion representatives of each table summarized the table's conclusions about the four areas of discussion that had been outlined by the moderators.

Erik Dickens, a member of the ECPP, prepared an excellent draft summary of the Workshop for the members of the ECPP and the residents of Estero. Some excerpts follow:

### **Excerpts from Dicken's Workshop Summary**

The complete summary report cites all the comments contained in the table summaries that have thus far been returned and has codified the comments based on how often they were made by the Workshop participants. The comments are color coded as follows in order to indicate the number of participants that mentioned the issue:

This is a comment that was repeated at least 5 times.

This is a comment that was repeated 3 or 4 times.

This is a comment that was repeated 2 times.

### **MOST PREVALENT COMMENTS:**

#### **ARCHITECTURE AND LANDSCAPING:**

- More architectural variety needed.
- Incorporate bike paths into developments.
- Need better code enforcement of signage, strip malls, RR, and vacant properties.
- Mostly Mediterranean style with pockets of Old Florida.
- Landscaping irrigation issues a concern
- Estero Gateway signs: "Welcome to Estero" needed.

### **OVERVIEW**

The community likes the method Estero has in place (EDRC, ECPP) to approve projects and protect Estero and feels these groups are doing a good job. In general, with limited exceptions, it is felt Estero should not reduce design standards to promote growth. As one person put it "what's built ugly stays ugly."

The architecture comments were mostly in favor of Mediterranean with some Old Florida mixed in. There were also many comments suggesting a mix of different architectures would be nice assuming it is tastefully done.

Landscaping comments were all over the spectrum with no specific theme coming through.

## MOBILITY:

- Add Light Rail
- Dedicated RH-turn lane from Three Oaks to Corkscrew so people don't go through gas station
- Get bike paths off of streets
- Crossing major roads on bikes is dangerous and needs large scale improvement.
- RR bed conversion to bike path/trail

## OVERVIEW

Long-term mobility was lightly addressed, inspired strictly by the questions asked by the table moderators. Of more concern were mobility issues perceived as being current and dangerous. Many problem intersections were listed along with the general concern about bicycle lanes on heavily trafficked streets.

Bike paths and Linear Park plans were frequently addressed. Almost every table stated the bike paths should not be integrated with heavily trafficked roadways. Of special concern was the danger to bikes on Corkscrew at the 41 and Three Oaks intersection.

Also emphasized was the connecting of parks, local town centers, libraries, or 'nodes' with bike and pedestrian pathways. This integrated well with the idea of a connected and/or linear park plan.

## SENSE OF PLACE:

- Diversify local economy with some employment centers other than retail. Non-retail should be sought after.
- Improve year around employment by creating mixed use areas
- More public access to rivers and bay, create parks near major waterways
- Need an Arts District
- More integration with Florida Gulf Coast University

## OVERVIEW

Biggest area of concern for Sense of Place was the waterways. Every table mentioned Estero's waterways but were concerned that either no access or no community areas on them. This theme is repeated in the Mobility section, especially around parks, pedestrian and bicycle paths.

People were also concerned there was little interactivity with Florida Gulf Coast University. It was felt the University offered many opportunities that were not being realized including arts, white collar jobs and increasing staffing for year-round employment opportunities.

There appeared to be some confusion over exactly what a Town Center is supposed to be. Some thought a Town Center would be comprised of local and government offices with some public entertainment venues. Others thought a Town Center would be a social focal point for Estero. Votes for or against a Town Center were almost evenly split.

## **Conclusion**

The full report will be posted on the ECPP website once it has been approved by the ECPP. The ECPP will be scheduling a series of public meetings throughout most of 2011 in order to research each suggestion and develop those that are deemed to be most significant and needed by the community.

## **Troyer Brothers Mine Battle Continues**

On December 7<sup>th</sup> the Troyer Brothers Mine public hearing will continue with presentations by Lee County Staff. Additional dates of December 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> have been set aside for the hearing if needed.

*During the first three days of public hearing we've had excellent support by the public with more than 40 residents from Estero, Corkscrew and Lehigh speaking in opposition to this project. However, if we're to continue our successes of the past it's essential that we have as many residents as possible speak in person at the public hearing. The hearing takes place at the Hearing Examiner's Meeting Room – 2nd Floor, 1500 Monroe Street in downtown Ft. Myers.*

As has been done in prior cases, the last hour or so of each hearing day is set aside for public comment. If you do not appear before the Hearing Examiner, by law you will not be permitted to appear before the Board of County Commissioners at the final hearing in this case.

Lee County Staff has issued a recommendation of DENIAL of the Troyer Brothers Mine application, finding it inconsistent with the Lee Plan, incompatible with surrounding uses, fails to protect natural and environmental resources, and fails to meet traffic standards.

### **Background:**

On November 17<sup>th</sup> a Lee County Hearing Examiner began consideration of another Corkscrew Road mining application; the third application to proceed through the County's rezoning process in the last 3 years. This project is called "Troyer Brothers Excavation" and would rezone 1,803 acres from Agriculture District (AG-2) to Mine Excavation Planned Development (MEPD) to allow mining activities including administrative offices and rock crushing operations. A 110 foot maximum mine depth is proposed with a mine duration is 35 years. In addition blasting and dewatering are proposed. At over 1800 acres, this is the largest mine yet proposed for the DR/GR area.

**Over 50 Estero residents testified against each of the last two Corkscrew Road mines  
...we look forward to your support once again.**

This will be the first mine application to be heard using the revised Lee County Mining Code adopted by the BOCC on September 9, 2008.

In June 2010 the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) voted unanimously to deny zoning for the 1,365 acre RCH mine on east Corkscrew Road after 22 days of Hearing by a County Hearing Examiner who recommended approval of the mine. This mine would have produced an average of 3,000 round-trip truck trips per day for the next 30 years. As a result of a court order this mine was heard under the old, far less stringent County mining regulations.

On June 16, 2008 the BOCC voted unanimously to deny zoning for the 318 acre Estero Group mine located about 7 miles east of I-75 on Corkscrew Road after a then record 17 days of Hearings before a Lee County Hearing Examiner.

As in the RCH Mine case the lawyers for Troyer Brothers have asked to have someone other than Lee County's Chief Hearing Examiner Diana Parker hear the case. In the RCH Case Judge Parker agreed to step aside and the case was assigned to an Assistant Hearing Examiner with no experience in such matters.

This time Lee County raised objections to this motion and a hearing was scheduled for November 2<sup>nd</sup>. Hearing Examiner Diana Parker denied the applicant's motion that she recuse (remove) herself, however she left the door open by saying that the applicant could restate their motion at the time of the hearing "should she be the Examiner assigned to the case". Once again she appointed the Assistant Hearing Examiner to hear this case.

Unlike the recent RCH mine hearing which proceeded by Court order, the Troyer Brothers application has met the County's sufficiency requirements under the new Chapter 12 Mining standards of the Land Development Code adopted by the BOCC in late 2008. These guidelines are quite stringent in terms of water modeling and monitoring.

The proposed Troyer Mine is located outside of the "Preferred Mining Area" overlay map which is part of the pending DR/GR Comp Plan Amendment. But because of the pending status, it will not be considered by the HEX in this case.

The Troyer Mine property has an existing unpaved access road entrance on Corkscrew Road, however the applicant is not proposing use of this entrance for dump trucks "at this time".



## **The County's Long Range Transportation Financially Feasible Plan Hearing Completed in November**

### **Overview**

If a road project is not in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) it cannot be built. When Federal legislation was approved to allocate \$10 million to the Coconut Road/I-75 Interchange it could not be built until the project was added to the LRTP. We defeated that road by successfully fighting for years to keep it out of the LRTP.

Every five years the Lee Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is required to update the LRTP and extend it for at least the next 20 years. In Lee County transportation planning is performed by the MPO, a panel of 17 members consisting of public officials from Lee County (all 5 Commissioners) and the five Lee County municipalities.

The planning process consists of two steps:

- Step one, the "Needs Plan", involves projecting the demographic and development changes that will occur during the planning period and the transportation needs that they require.
- The second step, the "Financially Feasible Plan", requires estimation of transportation revenues from all sources, local, state and Federal and how they should be allocated to the needed facilities.

### **The 2035 Financially Feasible Plan**

On October 26<sup>th</sup> the MPO presented the draft 2035 Financially Feasible Plan at a Public Hearing in the Three Oaks Banquet Center in Estero. In recent years the primary sources of transportation funding have declined significantly. Federal and State fuel taxes started to shrink even before the economy became soft due to the impact of high fuel prices and expanded use of more fuel efficient vehicles. In Florida most County and municipal transportation funds come from road impact fees. In Lee County these funds are down about 90% in recent years due to major declines in residential and commercial development.

As a result none of the new Estero road projects included in the 2035 Needs Plan are funded in the draft Financially Feasible report. The MPO will approve the final Financially Feasible Plan on December 8<sup>th</sup>. The 2035 Plan will then be forwarded to FDOT and the Federal Highway Administration for their approval.

### **During November**

On November 19<sup>th</sup> the MPO heard the staff recommendations and took public input regarding the 2035 Financially Feasible Plan. At this meeting the ECCL urged the MPO and FDOT to reevaluate the underlying demographic and development projections that were used as the basis for failing to fund the Corkscrew/I-75 Interchange and the widening of Corkscrew Road surrounding this interchange. The testimony pointed out that Estero has about 7.5 million

square feet of unbuilt commercially zoned land that will be served by this interchange, mostly before 2035.

MPO and FDOT staff continue to point out that the Corkscrew/I-75 Interchange is part of the State's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) and therefore must compete statewide for Federal and State funding.

Commissioner Manning asked the MPO staff to continue the consideration of these projects until the December 8<sup>th</sup> meeting when a final decision will be made on the Financially Feasible Plan by the MPO. Continued pressure from the community may result in some seed money being provided for these projects and/or their being added to the priority list for future economic stimulus or other unbudgeted funds.

### **The 2035 Needs Plan**

On October 22<sup>nd</sup> the MPO adopted a 2035 Needs Plan that is consistent with Estero's needs. It contains the following Estero projects:

- Corkscrew Road six laning from Three Oaks Parkway to Ben Hill Griffin
- The Corkscrew Road/I-75 Interchange widening and reconstruction
- Three Oaks Parkway six laning from Coconut Road to Estero Parkway
- Sandy Lane from Corkscrew Road to Estero Parkway, a new two lane road
- Via Coconut Point from the south end of Coconut Point to Old 41 in Bonita Springs, a new four lane segment.

In addition the Needs Plan removes two projects that Estero has long opposed:

- The Coconut Road/I-75 Interchange and its associated approaches, and
- County Road 951 (CR951), a four lane roadway that would run parallel to I-75 through the environmentally sensitive Density Reduction/Groundwater Resource (DR/GR) area on the east side of I-75.

Removing CR951 from the Needs Plan was one of three controversial decisions that the MPO decided in approving the Needs Plan. In the end the MPO voted 12 to 2 in favor of removing CR951 after a concerted effort by the City of Bonita Springs to keep it in the Needs Plan.

Eliminating CR951 accomplishes several community goals:

- lowers the cost of the 4,000 acre Edison Farms acquisition and restoration;
- preserves wetlands that store and clean rains that flow from the middle of the state through the DR/GR and into our rivers and streams and ultimately into Estero Bay
- reduces the threat of flooding for Estero,
- increases the region's water supply, and
- preserves Estero Bay as a tourist attraction.

## **Airplane Noise Progress Report**

On November 8th the Lee County Port Authority, the operators of Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW), met and approved the following items:

- 1) Accept a federal and a state grant for an airplane tracking system. This system, when implemented in the spring of 2011, will allow any Estero resident to use his personal computer to view the following information about any flight that they found annoying to them:
  - The track of the aircraft
  - The name of the carrier
  - The tail number
  - The flight number
  - The elevation of the flight as it went over their home

This information may be used to notify the Port Authority of any flight that has not followed the prescribed approach path.

- 2) The Port Authority Board, following the recommendation of the Airport Special Management Committee, selected ESA Airports to conduct the next Part 150 Noise Study required by Federal law every five years. The Authority staff will now negotiate the terms of a noise study contract with ESA. The study should begin by mid-2011

On November 10<sup>th</sup> several members of the South Lee County Airplane Noise Committee met with FAA and Port Authority officials to review updated FAA information on the noise issues the Committee has been discussing with the FAA since the new arrival patterns were instituted in October 2008. Their report included the following:

- A review of traffic patterns from the summer showed that almost all the aircraft using the SHIFTY 2 (the new pattern that brings aircraft over Estero) went out over the Gulf before turning back to the airport. This is an improvement from earlier when a large number of flights were “turning early” which brought the planes over more communities between Estero and the airport.
- The FAA agreed to supply the Committee with additional information on the use of alternative routes and a more detailed explanation of the reasons why one of our noise relief proposals cannot be implemented.
- The FAA reviewed their plans for implementing the satellite based “Next Generation” air traffic controlling system at RSW with the Committee. The FAA is currently conducting tests around the country that will allow aircraft to approach airports (including RSW) in a controlled “constant descent” approach. This new system will allow planes to approach airports and then use this constant descent procedure that will permit lower engine power (and sound) all the way into the airport. This is in contrast to the current procedures where aircraft use a stair step procedure to repeatedly lower their altitude and then increase velocity (and noise). The result would be a very significant decrease in noise level of approaching aircraft. We can expect this to be implemented in airports

around the country over the next 5 or 6 years, but the FAA indicated that RSW could well be among the earlier users for airports of its size.

- The FAA is committed to working with the Committee to find additional ways to reduce airplane noise over our area from aircraft approach RSW from the northeastern U. S.

The Committee has been working with the Port Authority Commissioners (They are the same as our Lee County Commissioners) to try and get some representation from south Lee County on the Airport Special Management Committee. If we succeed in this effort we will be in a better position to continuously encourage the Port Authority to be more proactive with the FAA regarding any changes that could negatively affect the residents of south Lee County.

### **Background Information**

In October 2008 the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) changed the [flight patterns for commercial aircraft](#) departing to or arriving from the northeastern section of the United States. As a result many Estero communities began to be impacted by noise from these aircraft. At that time the Estero Council of Community Leaders (ECCL) and the Brooks Concerned Citizens (BCC) formed a committee to work on this problem.

During the last two years the Committee has worked with the Regional Office of the FAA in an effort to reroute these flights or to alter these flight patterns so that they will provide noise relief for the residents of Estero. As a result of this effort some of the flights are being rerouted while other planes are flying higher than before. In addition the FAA has initiated a monitoring system that will soon be providing the Committee with periodic reports that will allow the Committee to assess the impact of the changes.

In the process of its work the Committee learned that many comparable airports have installed flight tracking systems that permit residents living in the airport's flight paths to use their personal computers to learn the altitude of any of the flights over their home. If that information indicated that the flight was below the required altitude the resident may then report it to the FAA and the Port Authority.

The Authority has requested proposals for the system's purchase and has received a proposal from Bruel & Kjaer Environmental Solutions. The proposal has been reviewed by staff and submitted to the FAA for compliance assurance. On September 28<sup>th</sup> the Airport Special Management Committee approved the purchase of the tracking system.

Every five years the Airport Authority is required by the FAA to update its Part 150 Noise Study. At the September 28<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Airport Special Management Committee four noise consultants were interviewed and the Committee voted to rank ESA Airports first among the

applicants for the job. Upon approval by the Port Authority Board staff will negotiate the terms of a noise study contract with ESA.

Members of the ECCL and BCC spoke with the ESA Airports representatives after the meeting. They are well aware of the noise issues produced by the 2008 landing pattern changes and promised to hold one or more hearings in Estero to determine what alternatives might be feasible in order to address the communities concerns.

### **Estero's Housing Permits Continue Extremely Slow Pace**

During October, eleven single family homes and two duplexes with a building value of only \$1.3 million were permitted in Estero. All the permits this month were for lesser-priced homes in Bella Terra, East of I-75 on Corkscrew. This continued slowdown in construction of new homes is helping to reduce the inventory of unsold new homes constructed in Estero during 2005 when 2,833 units were permitted.

Housing units permitted on a year-to date basis during 2010 are up modestly over the two prior years, but the figure remains far below the comparable figures for 2000-2006 and equals only 12% of the figure during 2002, the season immediately following the tragedy of 9/11/2001. In addition, the average building value, exclusive of land, has fallen precipitously this year to compete with the lower prices of existing housing units available on the market.

Of the 130 single family homes (building value of only \$23.5 M) permitted so far this year, 63% of the units have been generated by Lennar's Bella Terra. The two Toll Brothers' developments (Belle Lago and The Reserve of Estero) on Estero Parkway have contributed another 25% of the total.

The following table shows how the first ten months of 2010 compares with the same period of the prior ten years:

Year	Annual Total Housing Units	Building Value of Units	Average Building Value Per Unit	Percentage of Single Family Units
2000	1,861	\$259,965,981	\$139,692	41 %
2001	1,863	284,286,846	152,963	47
2002	1,355	251,080,157	185,299	51
2003	1,304	206,336,314	158,233	44
2004	1,393	307,246,114	220,564	63
2005	2,561	572,711,293	223,628	48
2006	1,235	320,509,719	259,522	38
2007	416	116,889,675	280,985	36
2008	143	48,334,352	338,002	80
2009	137	42,671,061	311,468	78
2010	166	32,951,160	198,501	78

The County permit information used in this report may be found at <http://www.lee-county.com/dcd/Reports/EsteroReports.htm>

### Estero's Permitted Commercial Building Values Continue Decline

During October, only \$318,000 of permits was issued for Estero commercial buildings. As shown below, for the first ten months year-to-date, the value of [commercial buildings](#) permitted in Estero totaled only \$7.3 million, by far the smallest year-to-date total on record.

Year	Year to Date	Annual Total
2000	\$74,191,144	\$77,250,835
2001	36,770,251	44,116,526
2002	21,575,789	23,135,139
2003	17,809,178	23,234,725
2004	40,832,565	60,859,820
2005	71,014,931	111,037,977
2006	177,322,397	184,709,240
2007	152,471,225	157,614,045
2008	38,454,732	39,261,677
2009	9,250,703	9,752,556
2010	7,275,517	?

As the above table indicates, Estero's commercial development started to expand rapidly in 2004 and peaked in 2006 with a total of \$184.7 million (excluding the land values). Total commercial investment in Estero has fallen precipitously since 2007 and continues to fall below the very low level of 2009.

From January through October, the major projects that contributed to the 2010 year-to-date total are:

- \$3,904,000 in the [Coconut Point Town Center](#)
- \$1,200,000 for improvements to the Lee County Corkscrew Road Wellfield
- \$1,875,000 for [Miramar Outlets](#) expansion
- \$800,000 for a new bank in the Coconut Trace Center
- \$619,000 for Villages of Country Creek Water Storage System
- \$638,000 for Meadows of Estero
- \$400,000 for Wildcat Run Country Club
- \$247,000 for remodeling Bonita Health Center
- \$202,000 for The Brooks Town Center
- \$128,000 for Corkscrew Palms
- \$104,800 for Estero Park Commons
- \$48,000 for Hyatt Equities Improvements

Reminder: The building values understate the cost of each residence or commercial building because they exclude the value of the underlying land.

