



## THE ECONOMIC CLIMATE IN SOUTHWEST FLORIDA DETAILS ON GROWTH AND URBANIZATION IN GREATER ESTERO

GREATER ESTERO COMMUNITY REPORT  
QUARTER 3 - 2024



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# THE GREATER ESTERO COMMUNITY REPORT

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## Introduction

The third *Greater Estero Community Report* for 2024 discusses the current economic situation and provides a detailed account of urbanization in our area. Engage Estero publishes the report, which is also available on our website. It is viewed by 3,000 to 5,000 people every month and is essential for understanding our community's developments. We value your positive feedback about this information.

In a recent presentation on July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Kevin Thorpe, Chief Economist and Head of Global Research at Cushman & Wakefield, provided an economic summary of the Nation, SW Florida, and Lee County<sup>1</sup>. He commented that the national economy is resilient; however, it is still fighting inflation. While the inflation level lags behind the decline in real estate prices, most other metrics indicate that inflation has slowed. He expects two rate cuts in September and December.

Southwest Florida's economy is thriving, outpacing the national and Florida State economies by approximately 1%. The robust job growth, particularly in the construction sector, is a testament to our region's economic vitality. With around 30,000 people choosing to make Southwest Florida their home every year, the housing market is also

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flourishing, with prices doubling between 2022 and 2023. These positive trends are expected to continue, with housing prices projected to remain stable for the next 4-5 years.

In the foreseeable future, we are expecting population growth to continue. New housing construction will help keep prices stable, and there is a high demand for office space in Southwest Florida, unlike the national trend. While the forecast is positive, we need to consider the potential impact of severe storms. For example, on Sept 29th, 2022, Hurricane Ian caused serious damage to the Sanibel/Captiva, Fort Myers Beach, Cape Coral areas, and parts of Naples and Estero.

In their report, the Lutgert College of Business, Regional Economic Research Institute also confirms the pick-up in our regional economy. In the first quarter of 2024

- Southwest Florida's **three regional airports** served 4.5 million passengers, up 18 percent from 2023 and higher than any of the region's other first quarters on record.
- Year-to-date seasonally adjusted **tourist tax revenues** also improved in February, increasing 14 percent from 2023 to 2024.
- The **housing supply** in Southwest Florida, measured by the residential active listings, has rebounded to pre-pandemic levels, suggesting a potential recovery from COVID-19 and a more balanced real estate market.
- The number of **single-family building permits** in the region has increased by 18 percent since last year, driven by increased construction and rebuilding efforts after the hurricane.
- Entering peak sales season, existing single-family **home sales** saw a 78 percent increase since the end of the fourth quarter of 2023.



However, it's important to acknowledge that despite these positive developments, our community is not without its concerns. Residents have expressed significant worries about:

1. The increased costs of food at the stores
2. The **higher restaurant charges** when eating out due to inflationary pressures from food prices.
3. **Increasing annual maintenance** fees for those in gated communities
4. **Increased Country Club fees** for those who enjoy golf and other leisure and recreational facilities.
5. The higher costs of **car insurance**
6. The significant problems relating to **household insurance**:
  - a) The real estate market's focus has shifted to housing attainability, especially regarding the increasing insurance rates in the aftermath of Hurricane Ian. This has led to many insurers leaving the Florida market. Although more



insurance companies are expected to enter the market, their impact is unlikely to be felt for some time.

- b) Annual premiums for insurance companies still offering coverage in Florida have increased by over 35%. This is significant for many Florida residents in our area, especially those on retirement income, and will cause future difficulties.

### **References**

US Economist Kevin Thorpe Discusses 2024 SWFL Economic Outlook, July 10, 2024. Horizon Council – The Voice of Business. <https://fortmyers.org/us-economist-kevin-thorpe-discusses-2024-swfl-economic-outlook/>

# Economy

## The Economic Climate in Southwest Florida: Details on the Growth and Urbanization In Greater Estero!

### Background

Urbanization and growth in Estero started in the late 1990's. Fast forward to today, and residents have become even more aware of the rapidly increasing growth in the Village of Estero and the surrounding area. For many years, those who bought land and registered with Lee County, the County's proposed broad building requirements "sat" on their purchase.

Now, given the considerable increase in the price of land approved for various options that have been sold to developers, and because of the earlier approval provided for development by Lee County, there is relatively little room for maneuvering that the Village of Estero can implement for those developments within the Village boundary. Style, colors, density, layout, landscaping, access, safety, and environmental issues can be addressed to ensure everything fits Estero's overall community plan.

Although issues that need to be considered when undertaking urbanization are extensive and include:

1. Population Growth and Density
2. Infrastructure Development
3. Environmental Impact
4. Economic Opportunities
5. Housing and Land Use
6. Public Services and Amenities
7. Transportation and Mobility
8. Safety and Security
9. Social Equity and Inclusion
10. Cultural and Historic Preservation
11. Climate Adaptation and Resilience
12. Regulatory and Policy Frameworks

Safety planning is one of the key aspects of urban development that cannot be



Unfortunately, many of these issues must be addressed at the State or County level, limiting local action. Public concern has been expressed about the impact of road congestion due to the increased density of the units allowed because of the large number of apartment buildings and the difficulties of building new roads to compensate for the growth.

In addition, due to the high costs involved in renting or purchasing these apartments, the opportunities for teachers and lecturers, healthcare workers, first responders, and other support staff to live close to their place of work are non-existent. This exacerbates traffic congestion. It is thus important when planning future developments in Estero that more consideration should be given to allowing workforce-related housing options. This could help alleviate road congestion and ensure that such workers will not be enticed away to other locations that offer lower-cost options.

In the coming years, it will be essential to ensure that local, county, and state elected officials focus on the urgency of minimizing the impact of rising temperatures and sea levels on our way of life in greater Estero. Water quality and quantity must also be addressed as the local population grows.

While there is much to be thankful for, vigilance and sound decision-making are needed to ensure we can continue enjoying our lives in greater Estero. Engage Estero will need your support to achieve a positive outcome.

The following chart highlights the continued growth planned along East Corkscrew Road. The total population could reach 57,000 in 10-15 years. This total would include the newly planned developments by Kingston and FFD (GL Homes) along East Corkscrew Road. However, Kingston Development and possibly FFD are on hold until the permitting process is resolved (see details under The Kingstone Development).

# Outside the Village

**Chart 1 Shows the Current & Likely Population Estimates Along East Corkscrew Road**

CY	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Estero</b>													
Wildcat Run	946	957	968	968	968	979	990	990	990	990	990	990	990
Grandeza	2152	2152	2152	2152	2152	2152	2152	2152	2152	2152	2152	2152	2152
Rivercreek												198	513
Preserve at Corkscrew		198	616	836	970	970	970	970	970	970	970	970	970
Bella Terra	3080	4158	4178	4178	4178	4178	4178	4178	4178	4178	4178	4178	4178
Stoneybrook	2462	2462	2462	2462	2462	2462	2462	2462	2462	2462	2462	2462	2462
<b>Total</b>	<b>8640</b>	<b>9927</b>	<b>10376</b>	<b>10596</b>	<b>10730</b>	<b>10741</b>	<b>10752</b>	<b>10752</b>	<b>10752</b>	<b>10752</b>	<b>10752</b>	<b>10950</b>	<b>11265</b>
<b>Outside Estero</b>													
The Place							473	1049	1707	2519	2827	2915	2915
Verdana										35	469	1252	1709
Corkscrew Shores				332	664	933	1133	1223	1382	1423	1423	1423	1423
WildBlue								51	539	1181	1470	2226	2295
FFD (GL Homes)													
Corkscrew Estates												66	110
Kingston													
	0	0	0	332	664	933	1606	2323	3628	5158	6189	7882	8452
<b>Total</b>	<b>8640</b>	<b>9927</b>	<b>10376</b>	<b>10928</b>	<b>11394</b>	<b>11674</b>	<b>12358</b>	<b>13075</b>	<b>14380</b>	<b>15910</b>	<b>16941</b>	<b>18832</b>	<b>19,717</b>
Annual Increase		1287	449	552	466	280	684	717	1305	1530	1031	1891	885
	Note: People estimate as of 6-30-2024												

**(Population estimates are based on 2.2 X the number of homes based on the chart from July 2024 updated figures )**

*Note: The Kingston Development (not listed above), if/when it proceeds, will involve approximately 10,000 new homes with a population estimate of 22,000. The FFD development will affect about 5,208 residential units (single-family and multi-family), with a population estimate of almost 11,500. Thus, when complete, the combined population from these two developments will be 33,500.*

## **PART 1: Developments Outside the Estero Village Boundary**

- [CenterPlace \(FGCU/ Miromar Lakes\)](#)
- [Centro Apartments, near Three Oaks Parkway, North of Alico Road](#)
- [FGCU Parkway and Ben Hill Griffin Road](#)
- [FFD \(Florida Farms Development\) Project East Corkscrew Road](#)
- [Ritz Carlton Residences at Estero Bay](#)
- [The Grove at Portofino Vineyards North of Estero Parkway.](#)
- [The Kingston Project East of Verdana Village East Corkscrew Road.](#)
- [Verdana Village on East Corkscrew](#)

### **CenterPlace (FGCU/ Miromar Lakes)**

CenterPlace is a mixed-use development in Fort Myers, adjacent to Florida Gulf Coast University and Miromar Lakes. This 886-acre community will feature 1,950 multi-family residential units, including condos and rental apartments at full build-out.

The commercial segment of CenterPlace will include a 250-room hotel, conference center, shops, and office space. About 170 acres of CenterPlace will be dedicated to open space, and the community features frontage on a beautiful freshwater lake. Walkability is a key design feature with commercial amenities within walking distance of residential buildings.



Private Equity Group is developing CenterPlace. It previously developed The Landings Yacht, Golf, and Tennis Club along the Caloosahatchee River in Fort Myers and the Coral Point Shopping Center in Cape Coral.

CenterPlace is in Fort Myers, east of Ben Hill Griffin Parkway and south of Alico Road. It is adjacent to Florida Gulf Coast University and the Gulf Coast Town Center.

### **Centro Apartments, near Three Oaks Parkway, North of Alico Road**

The Centro apartments, a 264-unit complex at the northwest corner of Interstate 75 and Alico Road, welcomed its first residents in October 2023. The 264 units have one to three bedrooms and private balconies. The Centro offers luxury studio, one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments. Residents can enjoy dining, shopping, recreation, entertainment, service, and academics within minutes of The Centro.





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Residents can enjoy dining, shopping, recreation, entertainment, service, and academics within minutes of The Centro.



**FGCU Parkway and Ben Hill Griffin Road**

The 12-acre site adjacent to the north entrance of Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU), located about two miles southeast of the Gulf Coast Town Center and Alico Road, was cleared in April 2023. FGCU was considering several options for the land at the time, but it has now been sold to a developer. There is no update to report at this time.

**FFD (Florida Farms Development) Project East Corkscrew Road**

FFD is a 5,208-acre site on the south side of Corkscrew Road, just east of Corkscrew Shores and west of Six L's Farm Road. GL Homes will develop the area of farm fields, uplands, and wetlands.

The proposed project includes the following:

- 5,208 residential units (single-family and multi-family) 1 unit per gross acre
- 100,000 square feet of commercial uses
- 240,000 square feet of amenity area use
- Existing agricultural services, including 50,000 square feet of research and development acreage for an elementary school, have also been included in their plans

According to the GL Homes Traffic Impact Statement, this project would generate 42,401 new daily trips. The peak-hour trips would be approximately 4,300 (in and out at the evening peak hour, around 5 PM). Although the building was anticipated to begin in early 2025, it is unclear whether this development is also delayed for permitting reasons similar to those impacting the Kingston site.

### **Ritz Carlton Residences at Estero Bay**

The Ritz-Carlton Residences, Estero Bay, a condominium development by London Bay Development Group, has sold over 80% of its units to date, totaling more than \$400 million in sales. This demand prompted the release of 112 additional waterfront residences in the North Tower. Situated on



nearly a mile of waterfront along Estero Bay and the Gulf of Mexico, the project will consist of 224 homes across two 22-story towers upon its anticipated 2026 completion. Construction is ongoing, with the initial foundation work finished. The development was formerly known as Bayview Development. For more details, see <https://www.theresidencesestero bay.com/>

### **The Grove at Portofino Vineyards North of Estero Parkway.**

The Grove is an apartment community in Lee County, north of Estero Parkway, just off Three Oaks Parkway, opposite Athenian Charter School in the 33967 ZIP Code. The Lee attendance zone serves this area. This three-story community has 312 units. The units have one, two, or three bedrooms and feature stainless steel appliances and walk-in closets. There is a clubhouse and fitness center onsite.



### **The Kingston Project East of Verdana Village**

In June 2022, Lee County Commissioners approved an extensive development after initially denying Corkscrew Grove Limited Partnership a limestone rock mine proposed for the same spot along Corkscrew Road. The homes will be built on over 6,000 acres of property extending from south of Corkscrew Rd. to SR-82.



Cameratta Companies' proposed development will include 10,000 dwelling units, a 240-unit hotel, 700,000 square feet of commercial space, and 3,287 acres of restoration, conservation, and flow way.

The proposed density on the site will be 1.5 dwelling units per acre. Cameratta has provided a K-8 school and will pay for the spine road within the complex and other vital contributions to safeguard water runoff and wildlife.

The property, used for agriculture, extends south of Corkscrew Road to State Road 82, bordering conservation lands such as CREW and the Imperial Marsh Preserve.

Cameratta Companies President Ray Blacksmith said the development will benefit the community, referring to the success of Cameratta's other properties on Corkscrew corridors. One of the properties, The Place, was used to showcase the success of Cameratta's conservation lands.

"Our efforts on the Kingston project will duplicate the restoration work that we've done at The Place and Verdana Village," Blacksmith said.

Development conditions of the project include open space, a human-wildlife coexistence plan, a central irrigation system, and hydraulic connections to provide an opportunity to improve flood control in the Wildcat Farms neighborhood.

The property is in a Density Reduction/Groundwater Resource area, a land-use category incorporated in the Lee Plan to address the development's effect on wetlands and natural resources. Cameratta acknowledged some of the development's inconsistencies with the Lee Plan but explained that each inconsistency was met with evidence of protection of the public interest. The density per dwelling unit is 1.5 dwelling units per acre.

The spine road in the development will cost \$40+ million, and the wildlife crossing will cost \$2 million. The estimated restoration construction will cost over \$78 million, all of which will be borne by Cameratta. Many other concessions are included; for example, Cameratta Companies stated they would incorporate necessary environmental and water runoff safeguards into their plans.

This includes removing a levy that impedes the water runoff from NE to SW. In addition, the developer plans to build a 2-lane boulevard each way from Corkscrew Rd to Ste Rte. 82 is working with the Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Lee County Department of Transportation to extend the Corkscrew Road widening Phase III to Kingston.

The MPO has also moved up the construction of the Alico Rd Connector from State Rte. 82, which could send some traffic North rather than down Corkscrew. However, many residents will likely want to travel to I-75 in an east-west direction. The impact of the additional population will still be felt mainly along East Corkscrew Road.

Earlier this year, a U.S. district judge ruled that the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Environmental Protection Agency violated the Endangered Species Act by putting Florida in charge of approving certain permits to fill in or build on wetlands.

Washington, D.C.-based Judge Randolph Moss, in a 97-page decision, overturned the federal agencies' decision, which was made four years ago, because they did not follow the required steps to make it legal for Florida officials to make such decisions.

The federal judge's ruling means state agencies such as the Florida Department of Environmental Protection cannot approve the required permits before anyone can build on a wetland. That stalls a pair of developments in the western Everglades—Kingston in eastern Lee County and Bellmar Villages in eastern Collier County—giving a big win to the large contingent of environmentalists opposed to the projects.

So, the development is on hold pending further investigation of the permitting situation.

### **Verdana Village on East Corkscrew**

Verdana Village, a Cameratta Companies operation, is now well advanced with homes by Lennar and Pulte Homes, showcasing several home styles and footprints. Home prices are in the \$500K-\$1M range.

Verdana Village is a large community in terms of area and provides indoor and outdoor tennis, pickleball, and basketball courts. There are resort pools and many other amenities.



In addition, residents now have a Publix-anchored retail shopping center outside the front gates, which opened a few months ago, including Heartland Dental, Publix Liquors, The Nail Lounge Spa, and Dunkin'. The Shoppes at Verdana Village provides 78,000 square feet of shopping space with top-tier local, regional, and national brands built to accommodate dining, beauty, banking, and medical services. There is up to 15,500 square feet of available small shop space with three out parcels for development.

COMING SOON!! The UPS Store – Estero Nail and Spa – Dunkin Donuts – Embark- New York Pizza and Pasta – Heartland Dental – Fifth Third Bank

## Part 2: Residential Developments Within the Village of Estero

- [Entrance to the Estero Recreational Center](#)
- [Estero Crossing -Stock Residential and Commercial project: the residential section will be called “Corsa” Corkscrew Road.](#)
- [Estero Town Homes \(Corner of Corkscrew Road and Sandy Lane- Formerly the Colonnade\)](#)
- [Coconut Landing.](#)
- [Copperleaf Three Oaks Parkway](#)
- [Genova: The Last Phase of the Development- Townhomes.](#)
- [Milan Villas- Northwest Corner of Williams Road and Three Oaks](#)
- [Northwest Corner of Estero Parkway and Ben Hill Griffin](#)
- [River Creek \(formerly Corkscrew Crossing\) East Corkscrew Road.](#)
- [Shadow Wood on Coconut Road](#)
- [The Brooks Town Center Development Plans involving the Previous Winn Dixie Building](#)
- [The Development of the 62-acre Land Parcel on the Estero River: Estero River Park.](#)
- [The Development on Broadway and US 41.](#)
- [The Development on the Northwest corner of US 41 and Coconut Road](#)
- [The Hospital Corp of America's Property on US 41 \(East side\) just North of Hertz – “Northpoint” HCA](#)
- [Via Coconut \(via Coconut on the west side of Genova\)](#)
- [West Bay Club](#)
- [West side of US 41 near Pelican Sound Blvd](#)
- [Wildcat Run on East Corkscrew Road](#)

### Entrance to the Estero Recreational Center

Plans to reconfigure the entrance to Estero Recreational Park on Corkscrew Road are underway. Civic engagement, sports, recreation, and concerned citizens are asking the Lee County Board of County Commissioners Parks and Rec Advisory Committee questions about the

plans for the main entrance to the Estero Community Park off Via Coconut Point. When implemented, this main entrance would facilitate connection to the potential Bonita Springs/Estero Rails to Trails development along the existing Seminole Railway land (BERT).

**Estero Crossing -Stock Residential and Commercial Project: The residential section will be called “Corsa.”**

Located on the south side of Corkscrew Road, between Three Oaks Parkway and I-75, Estero Crossing (east of Lowes) features 306 apartments and 60,000 square feet of retail shops. It is close to Corkscrew Road and includes six three-story luxury apartment buildings.



The commercial space is pedestrian-friendly, with brick-paver walkways, benches, and lush landscaping. Various businesses have already established their operations there. These include restaurants with indoor and outdoor seating, other entertainment venues, boutique-style shops, and even health and wellness offices and studios.

Current tenants include Chicken Salad Chick, Crisp and Green, Dunkin, Oak and Stone, Orange Theory, Restore Cryotherapy, Sherwin Williams, Affordable Dentures, The Joint, and Bubbakoos. Others planned include Estero Eye, Orange Theory Fitness, My Salon, Burritos, and Batteries Plus. The well-planned and designed combination of residential and commercial properties is an important addition to what is available in the area near Lowes Plaza.

In January 2024, the developer requested a development order to construct the residential portion of Estero Crossing, which includes six residential buildings, an amenity center, and associated parking lots. The name of the residential portion of Estero Crossing will be “Corsa” at Estero Crossing. The colors for the six residential buildings were revised to be consistent with the pattern book. Each building will have the same paint colors, but each building will have a unique articulation, so they are not identical. The paint colors are the same as the commercial portion of Estero Crossing.

**Estero Town Homes (Corner of Corkscrew Road and Sandy Lane- Formerly the Colonnade)Toll**

Brothers Estero Townhomes requested to rezone the 21.4-acre property located at the northeast corner of Corkscrew Road and Sandy Lane to allow for a maximum of 171 two-story townhome units at 35 feet. This property is currently zoned for a continuing care facility.

The applicant has met with their neighbors to the north and east to make them aware of the plans for this property. They plan to have a fence with enhanced buffer along the north side of the property, a pocket





park adjacent to a lake, an amenity center, and a 6-foot wall with enhanced landscaping along Corkscrew Road. There will also be a public amenity with seating and lush landscaping on the southwest corner. They plan to have two accesses to the site, one from Design Parc Lane to the east and the other from Sandy Lane. The builder has asked for a continuance at the August 2024 PZDB meeting. The Village has expressed concerns about the general

appearance and design of the proposed properties which will require modification.

### **Coconut Landing**

The development is located off Coconut Road, ¼ mile from the Coconut Point Hyatt Resort next to El Dorado Acres. Coconut Landing will have 25 single-family homes. All 25 homes have now been completed. Key features include open-concept floor plans, customizable outdoor living with a private pool, and exclusive Coconut Point Hyatt Resort VIP membership. Pricing starts from \$1.05 million.



### **Copperleaf on Three Oaks Parkway**

Copperleaf at The Brooks is expanding its clubhouse at Three Oaks Parkway and Coconut Road. Representatives for Copperleaf at The Brooks described their plans for expanding the clubhouse, pool café, and pool deck along with modifications to the golf cart and parking areas, adding 21 parking spaces for staff. They stated that the architecture and paint colors would coordinate with and enhance the original design. The modifications are estimated to be \$20M.

They are also adding a third bocce ball court, infilling wet detention lakes, and altering the clubhouse landscaping. The building process is currently well underway. The pool and pool restaurant opened in February 2024, and the final phase involving the pro shop and clubhouse will open in August 2024.



### **Genova: The Last Phase of the Development**

What began as a private gated community of luxury condominiums inspired by the Italian Riviera, Genova, is now getting ready to debut its final phase. The plan for additional condominiums has been amended to brand-new luxury villas and townhomes. Open-concept floor plans with

gourmet kitchens and outdoor living spaces are just some of the features that will be included. The resort-style amenities include lake and clubhouse views.

The townhomes will feature two garage spaces per unit, with varied building heights, shallow roof pitches with barrel tile as material, and wide overhangs. Attached balconies with decorative metal railings, square openings with an occasional archway, and architectural features with roof cupolas, corbels, and clay tile vents are also expected. CC Homes will build 31 villas, two stories, and 2,500 square feet.

Genova Gate Access Modification. Genova wishes to manage gate access with cameras and remote actions as a significant cost-saving strategy. The discussion was polarized and will involve HOA bylaws and approval thresholds (75%). The Village Planning, Zoning, and Design Board approved the change in 2023. Building has yet to commence.

The final phase of Genova consists of a mix of stately townhomes and luxury villas with open floor plans, gourmet island kitchens, private master suites, and spacious outdoor living areas. Building is anticipated to commence shortly.

#### **Milan Villas- Northwest Corner of Williams Road and Three Oaks**

Building on the 10 acres of land at the northwest corner of Williams Road and Three Oaks Parkway is now closing. The construction of 40 planned homes is now virtually complete. Landscaping on the site is also well-advanced

The homes are set into two rows, essentially with a road for internal access running north-south inside the developments and a roundabout at the southern end.

Some original trees and landscaping have been retained along Williams Road to the corner with Three Oaks. The homes, which average around 1,500 sq ft, are for sale around the \$500K level.



#### **Northwest Corner of Estero Parkway and Ben Hill Griffin**

There are no final plans in place for this site. Although The Hoffmann Group indicated some time ago that they would like to build a 150-room Hotel and small conference center on the site, those plans appear “off the table.” Other possibilities are being discussed, but no definitive decisions have been made.

#### **River Creek (formerly Corkscrew Crossing) East Corkscrew Road.**

The new community within the Estero Village boundary will consist of 395 acres and 544 single-family homesites, bounded by Corkscrew Road to the North, Wildcat Run to the West, The Preserve, and Bella Terra to the East. The homes will include single-family homes, twin villas, townhomes, and condominiums. Two hundred acres will be set aside as a preserve.





Homes comprise one and two-story home designs featuring a selection of standard luxury features. Floorplans range from approximately 1,900 to over 4,300 square feet, including up to five bedrooms, master suites upstairs or downstairs, 2-3 car garages, and flexible living spaces.

The development consists of a gatehouse and a common recreation area. The community will have awnings for the sports courts and bicycle stands.

The community features several lakes, and over half the acreage is dedicated to undeveloped preserves. This residential community will have three phases, with a common recreation area. River Creek's GL Homes' grand opening was on August 27th, 2023. The new home designs range from the \$600s and up. Click here to view the site.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ao6Uv9Pki04>

In August 2023, the developer requested approval to construct 200 single-family homes on 56.25 acres for Phase III of the River Creek Development. The Village Planning, Zoning, and Design Board noted no communication or conflict of interest. The front entrance has been completed, and 345 homes have been sold.

Considerable progress is being made on the 12,000-square-foot clubhouse, which was started in February 2024. The shell has been completed, and the main resort-style pool is also nearing completion.

### **Shadow Wood on Coconut Road**

Shadow Wood has plans to enhance and increase the entrance height to its Clubhouse to comply with emergency access requirements. Access to the clubhouse will be altered so that the road will run directly to the building. This also requires moving the tennis courts from their current location towards a new proposed building that will house four indoor Pickleball courts to be erected on the west side of the car park with a coffee shop, restaurant/bar, and outdoor swimming pool.

Shadow Wood also seeks to remodel the existing guardhouse on Coconut Road, changing its appearance and increasing the height of the roof overhang.

## **The Brooks Town Center Development Plans involving the Previous Winn Dixie Building**



Estero Village Council unanimously voted to affirm a development order on Dec. 13, 2023, for a four-story, 137-unit apartment complex at the northwest corner of Three Oaks Parkway and Coconut Road. The development order for the project, known as Brooks Town Center apartments, was approved with conditions by the Village Planning, Zoning, and Design Board on Oct. 10 in a 5-2 vote. Also approved was the stipulation that the 20 spaces immediately in front of the commercial area that are back-to-back spaces be strictly reserved for commercial and not for joint use.

In December 2023, Shadow Wood Resident Kathy Wyrofsky and four other Brooks residents expressed their concerns to Estero's Council about density, traffic, and land use issues. After losing their appeal to the Council, they filed a petition, known as a writ of certiorari, in Lee County Circuit Court asking a judge to "reverse and quash" the council's decision to allow the redevelopment project to move forward. They argued that the development order goes against the Estero Comprehensive Plan and the Estero Land Development Code. Due to some problems, the petition was handled by another law firm, Akerman LLP.

On a different issue, the former lawyer, Ralf Brookes, had indicated that the developer's lawyers were willing to negotiate potential concessions. However, despite a comprehensive list of issues prepared by a team of 15 residents, none of the suggestions were agreed upon. In July, Jane Graham was engaged to file a motion of leave in response to the developer's lawyers to dismiss the case.

### **The Development of the 62-acre Land Parcel on the Estero River: Estero River Park.**

Since the Village purchased the property in 2018, various discussions have occurred with the public and architects about acceptable options.

The 30 acres south of the Estero River will remain a protected environmental area that could not be developed following the council's vote to rezone the property from mixed-use to a public park. This rezoning ensures that it cannot be sold off for commercial use in the future.

The land south of the river is an area of natural beauty. There are many mature trees of several types, together with a wetland area and a section home to gopher tortoises.

The natural area will offer a peaceful natural environment for everyone to enjoy. Work is well advanced on the nature trails through the site, which is around 80% complete. An attractive open fence along US 41 and Corkscrew Road will also provide the property's boundary. The area will be available to the public in 2024. However, after a lapse of 6 years, the area north of the Estero River is still under consideration by the Village Council and management regarding the most suitable options.

However, at the Village Council meeting on Jan 21st, 2024, it was stated that Engineering Management contracts for the project would be outsourced for future development of the area to the north of the river. Hopefully, the Village will provide conceptual plans for the overall site for public comment shortly.

During the September 2023 meeting of the Village Planning, Zoning, and Design Board, Phase 1 was discussed: This involves an access drive, 85 parking spaces, bike racks, and Old Florida-styled restrooms on the north side of the Estero River. The toilets will be hooked into the nearby utility. A bridge will cross the river to the 8-foot ADA-accessible, porous multi-use on the southern side of the river. Decorative fencing will be on the park's perimeter at US 41 and Corkscrew Road, with a chain-link fence on the eastern railroad side of the property.

Access to this site is off US-41 to the southern end of Highlands Avenue, where the parking lot and bathroom will be located north of the Estero River. The existing swing bridge over the river will be replaced with a 10-foot-wide bridge leading to 8-foot-wide walking trails composed of recycled porous rubber. A bald eagle management plan is in place, as an eagle's nest is on the southwestern portion of this property.



Phase 1 represents less than 6 acres of the total 64 acres of the Village-owned Estero on the River property, located at the northeast corner of Corkscrew Road and US 41. At the January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, meeting, The Village Council approved \$151,440 for CW3 Engineering, Inc. to provide construction engineering and inspection services for the Estero on the River Phase 1 improvements.

The proposed Phase 2 improvements will include additional paths on the south side of the Estero River, a fence around the property south of the Estero River, and a path along the north side of Corkscrew Road. The additional paths will allow people to walk through the area during the eagle's nesting season.

### **The Development on Broadway and US 41.**

The Village Planning, Zoning, and Design Board approved a residential development involving 34 acres east of U.S. 41 in Estero, north of Broadway Avenue, East and west of the railroad tracks, in 2023. Land clearance is now underway.

The project's developer, Buckingham Co., is Indiana-based. It proposes three multistory buildings with 100 units each and ten townhomes with 310 units. Several years ago, Lee County approved two hundred thousand square feet for nonresidential use and a 125-room hotel.



The developer plans on using just 30,000 square feet of the nonresidential land-use entitlement. Two buildings will be mixed-use, with 5,000 square feet of non-residential use on the ground level. In contrast, the third building will house community amenities, including a public pocket park, two pickleball courts, a pool area, and a public passive park at Broadway Avenue. The development will no longer be called “Downtown Estero” to avoid confusion for residents.

Buckingham Development has the property under contract to purchase and develop the site. The project has permits, and a development order is being processed. The company hopes to wrap up permitting and begin construction this summer, 2024.

### **The Development on the Northwest corner of US 41 and Coconut Road (Woodfield Development)**

South Carolina-based developers Woodfield Development and ELV Associates now own the land (previously owned by Lee Health), which was acquired for \$32.6M. The 45.6-acre development is located at the northwest corner of U.S. 41 and Coconut Road in Estero. The mixed-use development, Woodfield Estero, is planned for 596 residential dwelling units, offices, retail, restaurants, and related uses.



The site has a 7.6-acre indigenous preserve area along the western and northern boundaries and some existing street infrastructure, including one access point from Coconut Road at Walden Center Drive, constructed as part of a previous development plan.

It is currently zoned for mixed-use development under the Mixed Use Planned Development (MPD) district classification. However, as required in the Village's Land Development Code for any planned developments in the Village Center Area, the application will request a rezoning to the Estero Planned Development (EPD) classification, specifically the Tier 3 Village Center designation.

The zoning change would allow residential and nonresidential uses in a more compact, urban form. The current plans for Woodfield Estero show nearly 600 residential dwellings with a mix of apartments and townhomes. A 260-room hotel will overlook one of the several community parks.

In July 2023, the Estero Village Council unanimously approved an ordinance with six deviations to rezone a 45.6-acre parcel from mixed-use to Estero's planned development. Council members mostly praised the project, but they did have some concerns. They thought the civic building, intended for about 3,000 square feet, was too small. Given the expanding local population, the developer was encouraged to double the size.

Phase 1 will begin a transformative journey, focusing on essential infrastructure such as stormwater retention, roadways, utilities, and lush perimeter landscape buffers along key areas, including the US-41 frontage. Plans also include the integration of a traffic signal or roundabout at the intersection of Coconut Road and Walden Center Drive, ensuring smooth accessibility for residents and visitors alike.

As updated in February 2024, Phase 1 of the project will start shortly. The project is set to introduce 296 modern apartments and 25,000 square feet of commercial spaces, all designed in the timeless elegance of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture. The community's overall blueprint is impressive, encompassing 596 dwelling units, 82,000 square feet of retail and dining options, a 260-room hotel, civic spaces totaling 6,000 square feet, and 42,000 square feet of general and medical office spaces.

Building aesthetics will feature a harmonious blend of two-, three-, and four-story structures adorned in taupe and linen, complemented by dark bronze accents. With a maximum height of 70 feet (excluding architectural features), the design ensures a balanced skyline. Notably, the two-story clubhouse will boast a picturesque waterfront view, enhancing the community's appeal.

Parking solutions have been thoughtfully integrated to minimize visual impact, with most spaces cleverly concealed from public view. Enhanced landscape planning further enriches the community's ambiance, promising residents a serene and verdant environment to call home. Additional information will be provided as it becomes available.

**The Hospital Corp of America's Property on US 41 (East side) just North of Hertz – “Northpoint” HCA**

Although HCA Healthcare purchased 100 acres in Estero for \$52.5 million in 2019, they are now selling a large part of the property. They will keep part of the site on the north side for a medical complex. Because no contract has been agreed upon, the potential outcome and range of options for the property still need to be clarified. If a large part of the property is sold to a developer, it seems unlikely that a hospital will be built on the site. The property on US 41 is north of The Hertz Building and borders Via Coconut on the eastern boundary.

Although “behind the scenes” discussions about plans are ongoing, no final decisions for this large land parcel have been taken or formally submitted to the Village.

### West side of US 41 near Pelican Sound Blvd

A 219-unit complex is being proposed for the location in the following map.



It will be a mixed-use development. Minnesota-based Roers Co is applying to the Village Planning, Zoning, and Design Board to allow a maximum of 219 Multi-Family Residential Dwelling Units on the 11+/- acre parcel located on the north side of Pelican Sound Dr.

The initial presentation on July 25th at the Village Planning, Zoning, and Design Board meeting was considered unimpressive and will need several modifications to move forward. There was significant pushback by residents of the Meadows.

The key objection was traffic at the intersection of Pelican Sound and US 41. Mary Gibbs indicated that a traffic light may be installed in the future because of the development of the Northpoint property on the east side of US 41. This puts the Pelican Sound intersection, Coconut Road, and Williams Road into the traffic pattern study. This will undoubtedly be examined in the 2024 Estero Traffic study, which is now well underway.

The property's current zoning is Camargo Trust mixed-use planned development. Since the site's future land use designation is at the Village Center, it must be rezoned to Estero's planned development standards to allow the project to proceed.

Estero's planned development has different tiers, mixed uses, and incentive offerings that must be addressed. The PZDB has pointed out that the maximum density permitted in the land-use plan is 27 units an acre for a Tier 4 compact community.

### **Via Coconut (via Coconut on the west side of Genova)**

This is a 20-acre development on the West Side of Via Coconut, south of Corkscrew Road.

Jones Lang LaSalle Americas, Inc. ("JLL") provides the +20.19-acre development site with approvals to break ground on a mixed-use development and a 1-acre public park, creating a landmark destination.



In January 2024, a public information meeting was conducted for a request for a development order for Via Coconut's mixed-use development of 330 multi-family units, 29,600 square feet of commercial use, and a 10,000-square foot church, a one-acre public park on Via Coconut Point across from Genova. The public amenities include a dog

park, pocket park, meandering multi-use path, fishing pier with bike rack, and the one-acre park being donated to the Village.

The commercial development will likely include an Animal Clinic, Banks and Financial institutions, a Bar, a Broadcast Studio (Commercial Radio and Television), and cinemas and theaters. Community Gardens and a public dog park on the south side of the property are also included in the plans. Other options being considered for the development include restaurants, convenience food and beverage stores, a cultural facility, a daycare center, and a drugstore. A hardware store, Household and Office Furnishings, Insurance Company, Dry-cleaning and Laundry Services, Library, Post Office, and Medical or Dental Lab.

The public amenities include a dog park, pocket park, meandering multi-use path, fishing pier with a bike rack, and the one-acre park being donated to the Village. Their plans call for multi-family buildings, commercial space with potential restaurants and retail space, and a park.

They will have a mixture of lakes, stormwater vaults, a filter marsh, and two access points on Via Coconut with future pedestrian and vehicular access to the west. There was a lengthy discussion regarding drainage. The Village Planning, Zoning, and Design Board approved the

plans with staff stimulations. There will be two access points on Via Coconut with future pedestrian and vehicular access to the west. No ground has been broken, but this could start later this year. An amendment to the plan will be heard in July by the PZDB and will include several changes to the mixed-use project consisting of:

- Elimination of the “under-building parking” and replacement with garages, carports, and surface parking behind the buildings.
- Modification of building footprints and shifting of some units. The height of mixed-use buildings along Main Street will be reduced from 3 to 2 stories.

The following link shows the details of the planned development.

<https://play.champds.com/ATT/esterofl/2021-08/6198cfd30c43c0728c3650f2a813b4d88454d43f.pdf>

### **West Bay Club- The Island Highrise.**

West Lake Court at the West Bay Club will have 26 Luxury Villa Single Family Homes (now under construction) with spectacular waterfront and golf views.

In addition, Garcia Stromberg has designed a new high-rise, "The Island." It will have a central core building designed to maximize the panoramic views from every residence. The new condominium will focus on outdoor living, an appreciation for sunsets over the Gulf of Mexico, and a rooftop amenity deck with a pool and fitness area.

The residences will have wider terraces with summer kitchens, expansive glass walls, and premium interior finishes. The building will be 23 stories over parking (approximately 270 feet) plus 20 feet for rooftop equipment. The high-rise building will be built on Pod 5 at the West Bay Club. It will have four units per floor, with two penthouse levels. The glass on the building will be non-reflective. West Bay Club is located at the end of Williams Road, west of US 41.



In July 2024, it was announced that Kolter Urban had selected Manhattan Construction Company as the general contractor for The Island at West Bay Club, a 24-story, 86-unit luxury condominium at 5100 Bayridge Boulevard within the master-planned golf community of West Bay on Florida’s Paradise Coast. The project, designed by Garcia Stromberg Architects, recently received a construction permit from the Village of Estero.



“We are thrilled to announce our partnership with Manhattan Construction Group as the general contractor for The Island at West Bay Club,” said Brian Van Slyke, Kolter Urban’s Regional President. “With the development officially underway, we’re pleased to pair our vision for The Island at West Bay Club with Manhattan Construction Group’s extensive expertise and commitment to quality to deliver an exceptional living experience for our future residents.”

It is anticipated that ground will be broken soon, with completion of the project likely in 2026.

### **Wildcat Run on East Corkscrew Road**

The Village Planning, Zoning, and Design Board approved Wildcat Run’s application to improve the clubhouse and parking. The plan includes a newly paved parking lot, realignment of existing parking spaces, and drive aisles. ADA access from the parking lot to the existing clubhouse sidewalk separated golf cart parking spaces, bike rack areas, and improved pedestrian and staff pathways are included. Four heritage trees, 3 of which were planted too close to each other and one over-pruned, will be removed and replaced with 20-foot-tall live oak trees between the parking lot and the residences.

The community also seeks to renovate one of the five existing tennis courts into four new pickleball courts. These courts would be located south of the clubhouse in the center of the development. This request was made in May 2024.

# Recreation



## Part 3: Recreational Developments Planned in Estero

- [A New Recreational Center in Estero](#)
  - Replacing the Driving Range with Sports fields
  - New football field for Estero High School
- [BERT- The Bonita, Estero Rails to Trails.](#)
- [Miromar Outlets](#)
- [The Brooks Pickleball Expansion](#)
- [The Estero Park and Recreation Center's Playground](#)

### A New Recreational Center in Estero -Replacing the Driving Range and Using the Land Purchased by The Village on Williams Road and Via Coconut.



The sports complex will be located on the parcel of land between Williams Road and Via Coconut Point. Although The Village of Estero closed down the Golf Coast Driving Range last year, the all-new multi-sport entertainment center is commencing development. Following Chicken and Pickle's decision to pull out of the project, High 5 Entertainment will control the Pickleball courts on the site.

Crews are expected to begin groundwork for the new High 5 Entertainment complex in June. The brand-new High 5 Entertainment building will sit on the 20-acre property on the north side of Williams Road, east of Coconut Point. It will consist of two floors of indoor and outdoor entertainment spaces, including:

- 21 pickleball courts
- 16 full-size bowling lanes
- eight lanes of duckpin bowling

- Bocce ball
- 18 holes of miniature golf
- Axe throwing
- Immersive laser tag
- An arcade
- Patio dining and a bar

The High 5 Entertainment Complex will now take charge of both its operation and the Pickleball courts that will be built even though Chicken and Pickle have pulled out of the arrangements. The Entertainment complex will be built on two floors, featuring a state-of-the-art arcade with virtual reality, laser tag, mini golf, duckpin bowling, bocce, axe throwing, escape rooms, and a full-service restaurant.

The site plan includes a large space for an additional partnership that has yet to be announced.



In January 2024, the Village Council and Lee Schools agreed to lease just over 50 acres of the adjacent playing fields for 99 years. The village will spend around \$10M on updates and renovations, including covered areas over the basketball courts, renovations to the tennis courts that could also be used as pickleball courts, and artificial turf installation for the stadium fields. Rezoning has been approved, and the development order is being processed.

This lease will make facilities available to sports organizations and citizens when school is not in session. This provides functional resource access without purchasing land at an estimated \$500K / Acre. Taxpayers have already purchased the land for the school district. The Village Manager and Council members touted the benefits without describing the impact on Estero's character or vision. They expect to invest this summer to improve tennis, pickleball, and covered basketball courts. The Village Manager commented that the expansion of recreational facilities is included in the master CIP plan.

### **BERT- The Bonita Estero Rails to Trails.**

The proposed Bonita Estero Rail Trail (BERT) will run from just south of the Lee Collier County border to Alico Road along the 15-mile unused rail corridor through downtown Bonita Springs and Estero, ending just north of San Carlos Park at Alico Road. BERT will connect to the John Yarborough Trail to the north and the Paradise Coast Trail to the south. Once complete, BERT will become part of the planned 42-mile Florida Gulf Coast Trail network in Lee County and, ultimately, part of the 400+ mile Florida Gulf Coast Trail stretching from Collier County to Tampa.

Earlier this year, The Bonita Estero Rail Trail project hit a milestone. After four years of negotiations, the "Trust for Public Land" secured a purchase and sale agreement on the 14.9-

mile segment of the Seminole Gulf Railway that stretches from Alico Road to Collier County for \$82 million.

Discussions between the County, Bonita Springs, and Estero Councils regarding how to fund the extensive costs of this project are ongoing.

It is exciting to learn that Schenkel Shultz in Estero, specializing in strategic planning, architecture, and urban design, has begun examining the logistics and details required to ensure the project's success. They are reviewing where to locate restrooms, parking, and bridge designs where needed. Although it will still take time before the work to convert the Seminole railway land to the bike and walking trail commences, the outcome described is very encouraging.



Friends of BERT, an all-volunteer non-profit 501(c)(3) citizen group dedicated to bringing the Bonita Estero Rail Trail (BERT) and Florida Gulf Coast Trail (FGCT) to Lee County communities, has worked hard over the last few years to advocate for and encourage this development, which Engage Estero has supported.

#### **Billiards and Bowling -Miromar Outlets.**

Billiards & Bowling opened in July 2025 at Miromar Outlets. It is a 28,000-square-foot entertainment venue across from Wasabi Japanese Steakhouse.

It offers 16 bowling lanes and five pool tables. There are four axe throwing lanes, three Krazy Darts lanes, and two golf and sports simulators that can be leased per hour.

#### **Purchase of Previous School Site planned on Three Oaks Road and Corkscrew.**

The Village will purchase the land for \$15M to improve stormwater management and designate the land “not for commercial use.” This will help reduce any further commercial and residential buildings on the site.

A procedural item was implemented in the January 21<sup>st</sup> Village Council meeting to empower the Village to use this village asset to sell bonds and return cash to the Village for other priorities.

#### **Sandy Lane Bike and Pedestrian Improvements.**

In January 2024, the Village Council approved \$490,560.65 for HighSpans Engineering, Inc. to provide construction engineering and inspection services for the Sandy Lake Bike/Ped Improvements. In February, \$47,200 was approved for easement acquisition. The construction manager's approval for the project was agreed upon in May.

#### **The Brooks Pickleball Expansion**



A public hearing was conducted for The Brooks CDD expansion of pickleball courts adjacent to the Commons Club on Coconut Road. They currently have three courts, but they plan to expand the facilities due to the high demand from the four communities in The Brooks.

In the latter part of 2023, the Commons Club agreed to purchase land owned by the CDD, close to and including the three

existing Pickleball courts. This brings control completely under the Commons Club's operation and thus restricts use to members only. Plans are now to expand the number of courts for members of the Commons Club at the Brooks over the next few years.

In April 2024, the application to the Village Planning, Zoning, and Design Board (PZDB) was to reduce the number of planned pickleball courts from 16 to 11, relocate the open-air shade structure, change landscaping and lighting, and adjust the project's construction phasing. This was approved in May with some stipulations.

### **The Estero Park and Recreation Center's Playground**

Playmore West, Inc. was contracted to replace the existing north-side playground section at Estero Park. The new playground replaces the 17-year-old playground, which showed signs of wear and rust deterioration. This playground now has play components for 2 to 5-year-old children, additional swings, and better accessibility. It cost \$300,000; funding was included in Lee County's Parks and Recreation Department's budget.

The Estero Park and Recreation Center playground project work is complete! The new and exciting features are ready for residents and their children to explore. Here's what you can look forward to:

- Zip-line: Glide through the air and feel the rush of excitement on our brand-new zip-line.
- Play Structure: Climb, slide, and explore our multi-level play structure designed for endless fun.
- Alligator Climber: Challenge your climbing skills and conquer the alligator climber, a unique addition to our playground.
- Shade Structure: Stay cool and comfortable under the shade structure while keeping an eye on the kids.
- Gaga Ball Pit: Engage in the fast-paced, fun-filled game of Gaga Ball in our dedicated pit.

Enjoy the new amenities available at the Estero Park and Recreation Center!



## Part 4: Commercial Developments

- [Abbiati Dental Office Building US 41 and Fountain Lakes.](#)
- [A New Hilton Garden Inn on Sweetwater Ranch Blvd.- Marketplace at Coconut Point North.](#)
- [A new Home2 Suites Hotel in Coconut Point between The Cinema and via Coconut.](#)
- [AT&T Cell Tower \(at 3231 Coconut Road adjacent to the Bonita Springs-Estero Elks Lodge\)](#)
- [Bella Terra Cell Tower](#)
- [Coastal Palms Academy Daycare River Ranch Road and Corkscrew Road](#)
- [Chiropractic Care and Rehab 9250 Corkscrew Road](#)
- [Coconut Point Additions New Stores Since January 2024](#)
- [Barnes and Noble](#)
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- [Sunglass World](#)
- [Untuckit](#)
- [Warby Parker](#)
- [Coconut Point Additions Coming Soon](#)
- [PJK Neighborhood Chinese Restaurant.](#)
- [Real Seafood](#)
- [The Grounding Spot](#)
- [Coconut Point Ford](#)
- [Corkscrew Pines Self Storage Units on Corkscrew Road near Stoneybrook](#)
- [Coconut Trace across from the Coconut Point Mall](#)
- [Culvers at US 41 and Pelican Colony Blvd](#)
- [Estero Eyebuild \(former application in the name of Ginsberg Eye Center\) at Corkscrew Palms.](#)
- [Goodwill – New location in Lowes Plaza on Corkscrew Road](#)

- [Integrative Rehab Clinic on Corkscrew Road.](#)
- [Land Parcel to the North of Houck Dermatology Building](#)
- [Lavish Wellness on US 41](#)
- [Palms Day Care for Early Learners.](#)
- [Renovations at the South County Regional Library in Estero](#)
- [Shopping center east of Corkscrew Shores and south of Corkscrew Rd](#)
- [Spavia Day Spa. Highland Oaks Drive](#)
- [Starbucks New Location. Coconut Road is Next to Wawa in Lowes Plaza.](#)
- [SW Corner of Corkscrew Road & River Ranch Road](#)
- [The Goddard School for Early Development -Corner of Quente Way & Three Oaks Parkway.](#)
- [The Old Post Office 8111 Broadway E.](#)
- [The Shoppes and University Highlands off Ben Hill Griffin Parkway.](#)
- [Walmart on US 41 in Estero](#)
- [Wawa Convenience Food & Beverage Store with Gas Development](#)
- [10-acre site on US 41 in front of Rapallo- Marketplace at Coconut Point](#)

### **Abbiati Dental Office Building US 41 and Fountain Lakes.**

The Estero PZDB conducted a public information meeting for the proposed Abbiati Emergency Dental Office Building, which would be located on a 1.45-acre vacant parcel on the west side of US 41, south of the Fountain Lakes entrance. The preliminary plans call for 10,000 square feet for dental offices and possibly 5,000 square feet for general office use.



They plan to offer walk-in services for residents experiencing a dental emergency. The building would face the street with parking behind it. The architecture is Prairie style. Among the list of green and sustainable building features are a Tesla solar roof and power wall storage system, rainwater harvesting and cistern for landscape watering, and recycled materials where possible. They also plan to have a covered seating area for the public.

Some concerns about safety, traffic, and access through the Fountain Lakes entry were expressed. Voting does not occur during public information meetings.

**A New Hilton Garden Inn on Sweetwater Ranch Blvd.- Marketplace at Coconut Point North.**

An Ohio-based company proposes a five-story, 115-room 5, 5-story Hilton Garden Inn hotel on a 2.16-acre parcel at 8009 Sweetwater Ranch Blvd. An application before the Village Planning, Zoning, and Design Board in October requested consideration for the proposed development. The 2.16-acre parcel is at the southwest corner of Via Villaggio and Sweetwater Ranch Blvd., adjacent to the Estero Fire Station. The 5-story building was approved in November with stipulations for the addition of signs cautioning people to watch for pedestrians and providing extra glass on the west elevation.

**A new Home2 Suites Hotel in Coconut Point between The Cinema and via Coconut.**

The company is considering building in the area above, but no application has yet been submitted. Still, it would be situated on 2.37 acres at Coconut Point Mall between the cinema and Via Coconut.

**AT&T Cell Tower (at 3231 Coconut Road adjacent to the Bonita Springs-Estero Elks Lodge)**

The first public hearing addressed a notable exception for a 100-foot-tall AT&T wireless telecommunications facility on the Bonita Springs-Estero Elks Lodge property at 3231 Coconut Road.

The applicant revised their original application from 149 feet to a 99-foot monopole with a 1-foot lightning rod for a total height of 100 feet. Space will be made available on the monopole for two other providers. They stated that the tower is needed to provide capacity and coverage for this area.

The facility will include the monopole with antennas, a 20 x 15-foot area for a generator, and an equipment shelter for each antenna array. This will be enclosed by an eight-foot wooden fence surrounded by a ten-foot-wide landscape buffer. In addition, this tower will have FirstNet, a network service for first responders. It will not be lit at night.

Although public comments were considered, the application was approved for a 100-foot-tall tower with conditions.

**Bella Terra Cell Tower**

Broadus Towers will install a cell tower along East Corkscrew Road near Bella Terra.

The 148' cell tower is to be increased to 178'. It will involve:

- Monopole = 1 support pole, no ironworks or guy wires
- Antennas mounted on the headframe at the top
- Dull gray tones to help minimize visibility







- The Monopole will meet all aspects of the Village Tower Code (No Variances)
- This Monopole will be completely dark at night. This Monopole will be designed to hold antennas for up to 4 carriers

Bella Terra has been notorious for poor cell service, especially at the southernmost location. The tower is needed to provide the residents with communication with Fire and rescue resources. Fire and Rescue are in Bella Terra 3-4 times a week. Multiple meetings have been held about this issue, and over 70% of the residents approve of the cell tower.

The Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) has approved the tower's construction. The Village Council requested an update on the Mosquito Control and Port Authority approval. As of June 18th, the company had received the Mosquito Control and Port Authority (Tall Structures) agreement, and it was determined that the tower would not require a light.

Broadbus is working on obtaining approval for an exemption for the South Florida Water Management District. Once achieved, they will file with Estero Village for a Limited Development Order (site plan approval). They will file for building permits once the limited development order is approved. It is anticipated that Broadbus will have the building permit review by the start of Q4, pending the Village Staff's review times and any shutdowns from storms.

In March, the PZDB agreed with the proposal to increase the height of the cell tower to 178 feet and increase the fall radius. Conditions were mentioned before the Council approved the change, plus the need to have an updated letter from the engineer addressing the taller tower height and the fall radius. All approvals have now been secured. Construction is expected to start in the 4th Quarter 2024. This will provide improved service for Verizon and T-Mobile customers. There are also two future lease areas available for additional providers although Engage Estero is unaware of which companies will be involved. Residents are hoping that one of those leases will be taken up by AT&T.

### **Coastal Palms Academy Daycare River Ranch Road and Corkscrew Road**

A development order has been submitted to build a 15,000 sq ft daycare center on the vacant ± 3.5-acre site on the southwest corner of River Ranch and Corkscrew Road.

### **Chiropractic Care and Rehab 9250 Corkscrew Road**

The Chiropractic Health Center is dedicated to helping improve your health naturally. Its goals are simple: to help reduce pain and restore lost function, to assist in getting your life 'back.' For those looking for prevention and maintenance, the company is willing to provide the aid necessary with natural, safe, and effective chiropractic care.

## **Coconut Point Additions.**

### **New Stores Since January 2024**

#### **Barnes & Noble**

Opened in January 2024, the store features a new, more inviting design. It includes themed "rooms," lighter colors, and a selection of books, toys, and games based on what local customers want. The store is at 8052 Mediterranean Drive, Estero, next to DSW and Ulta Beauty.

#### **BH2.0**

BH2.0 is a lifestyle fashion retailer with the hottest clothing and shoe brands relevant to today's market. Our buying team scours the industry for the newest and greatest! Carrying everything from men's and women's lifestyle apparel to branded shoes and accessories, BH2.0 strives to stay in line with the hottest trends and fashion movements. With BH2.0, it is more than fashion; it is a lifestyle!

#### **Chatime**

Chatime is a global beverage brand that brings the world together with endless ways to enjoy every kind of drink. From their original bubble teas to new beverage creations, every cup is fresh, flavorful, and fun! The company appeals to tea fans who love to customize and build their creations with over 100 flavor profiles, abundant mix-ins, and infinite bubble tea combo possibilities so everyone can celebrate every choice they make.

#### **Evereve:**

The retail chain focuses on denim, casual wear & occasion dresses, plus shoes & accessories for women.

#### **Face Foundrie**

The company is an all-inclusive focused facial bar. They empower customers to look and feel their best by providing cutting-edge services, accessible pricing, and an extensively trained staff of skin experts.

#### **Lululemon**

lululemon is a yoga-inspired, technical athletic apparel company for yoga, running, training, and most other sweaty pursuits for both men and women. It is scheduled to open between Butterfly Beach and Warby Parker in June 2024.

## **Sunglass World**

It is now open and offers the largest selection of sunglasses in the mall. Premium brands include Oakley, Maui Jim, Nike, Ray Ban, Calvin Klein, Bolle, Tommy Hilfiger, Serengeti, Polo, Gargoyles, Killer Loop, DKNY, Kenneth Cole, and Ralph.

## **Untuckit**

UNTUCKit has given men a seamless way to look sharp and feel casual by creating shirts designed to be worn untucked. The brand has since expanded to offer fit combinations for all shapes and sizes and new product categories like pants, polos, tees, Henleys, sweaters, jackets, and sports coats. It also offers a wide selection of shirts, dresses, and jackets for women. UNTUCKit is dedicated to creating an unmatched shopping experience.

## **Warby Parker**

Has licensed optometrists available to assist with eye examinations. It is one of the country's largest networks of trusted eye specialists, making quality eye care accessible and affordable for everyone. The company accepts HSA/FSA funds on purchases of glasses, prescription sunglasses, sports goggles, contact lenses, lens cleaners, solutions, and more. You can also use them for eye exams or contact lens fittings. However, you don't need insurance to get a good deal. We offer everyday low prices and exclusive offers. With their 2-pair offer, you get two pairs of glasses and an eye exam for \$79.95.

## **Coming Soon to Coconut Point**

### **PJK Neighborhood Chinese Restaurant.**

PJK will open in late fall between Divieto and Ruth's Chris Restaurants. It is described as a "modern take on Chinese cuisine." The Paul Fleming Restaurant Group, founder of Fleming's Steakhouse and P.F. Change's brands, will run it. It already operates a PJK in Naples.

### **Real Seafood:**

Real Seafood Co. is moving from 8960 Fontana Del Sol Way, North Naples, to its new location at Coconut Point in Estero.

The restaurant will open in the Fall of 2024. The upscale seafood establishment is currently building out the large space that previously hosted Bokamper's Sports Bar & Grill and Hemingway's Island Grill. The restaurant has a capacity for 350 diners.

Real Seafood is a dinner-only restaurant that specializes in the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, and Great Lakes seafood. Its menu features entrees such as Miso-Glazed Chilean Sea Bass, Stuffed Atlantic Salmon, and Coconut-Encrusted Fried Gulf Shrimp.



### **The Grounding Spot**

Grounding Spot, a mental wellness club, will open its doors in Coconut Point Mall in Estero on May 25. The opening dovetails with Mental Health Awareness Month, which strives to overcome stigmas and other mental health and well-being challenges. More: Benefits of hot yoga: It can burn many calories, but it's not for everyone.

Grounding Spot will take a preventative approach with programs to maintain a “healthy mental state, ” including staying connected, exercising, good nutrition, mindfulness, and self-care. “Whether it’s work-life stress, anxiety, or depression, many people struggle daily,” said Grounding Spot founder Frances Borshell.

### **Coconut Point Ford Estero**

Coconut Point Ford has applied to expand their operation on the west side of US 41 and south of Galloway Ford Road. Currently, the property is used for Coconut Point Pre-Owned vehicle sales. They will construct 18 additional vehicle service bays, 14 parking spaces, and related infrastructure. The work was completed earlier this year.

### **Corkscrew Pines Self Storage Units on Corkscrew Road near Stoneybrook.**



The Village Planning, Zoning, and Design Board reviewed this development proposal at a public hearing in 2023. The proposal is for self-storage located on the south side of Corkscrew Road, east of Stoneybrook Golf Drive and west of Firehouse Lane.

The applicant requested a development order to construct a three-building, 134,000-square-foot self-storage facility, associated drainage, utilities, and landscaping. The architecture is mission revival style. To mimic separate buildings, undulations have been created every 100 feet of the building facing Corkscrew Road. The paint colors are shades of tan and beige with brown accents. The landscaping includes a variety of trees and perimeter shrubs.

The Village Planning, Zoning, and Design Board voted to approve this application with several conditions. At this time, no information is available on the completion date.

### **Coconut Trace across from the Coconut Point Mall**

At the April PZDB meeting, a zoning amendment was made for the Planned Development Amendment (District 1). 22910 Lyden Drive is west of US 41, across from the Coconut Point Mall. The applicant was seeking a zoning amendment to allow a 122-room hotel on Tract F. Currently, a hotel is only allowed on Tracts A and D.

### **Culvers at US 41 and Pelican Colony Blvd.**

Culver's restaurant is planned for US 41 and Pelican Colony Blvd., near Bonita Community Health Center. The building is now open and can seat 50+ patrons.

### **Estero Eyebuild (former application under Ginsberg Eye Center) at Corkscrew Palms.**

The building is a two-story medical and general office building in the office park Corkscrew Palms Commerce Center at 9441 Corkscrew Palms Circle. It plans to have medical offices on the second floor and future tenant space on the first floor.



The Eye Center is a boutique, patient-centered ophthalmology practice focusing only on the patient's experience and eyes. It strives to address each person's needs in the best way possible, starting by listening. The offices of Ginsberg Eye specialize in personalized, ultra-modern eye care and surgery.

There are 70 parking spaces, including handicapped parking. The facility will open in August 2024.

### **Goodwill – New location in Lowes Plaza on Corkscrew Road**

Representatives for Goodwill Industries have described plans for a store with a drive-thru donation center at the southeast corner of Corkscrew Road and Three Oaks Parkway in the Estero Town Commons, also known as the Lowes Plaza.

They stated they had outgrown their facility on the north side of Corkscrew Road. The 2.69-acre vacant parcel will involve a 21,800-square-foot, one-story building with a drive-thru. The Village Planning, Zoning, And Design Board approved the application with specific stipulations.

It is understood the color of the building will be beige/white with decorative tile roofs and brown trim, and it includes trellises with plant materials. The plan is to preserve much of the existing heritage oak tree border along the corner of Three Oaks Parkway and Corkscrew Road and add additional landscaping. There may also be a public plaza with benches and bike racks.

In May, the company requested that the original site plan be modified by replacing the loading zone with a playground and changing the building's color scheme.

### **Integrative Rehab Clinic on Corkscrew Road.**

Integrative Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation clinic is centrally located in Estero, Florida. They offer treatment for sports injuries, arthritis, and joint pain with a comprehensive team approach to help patients eliminate pain from neuropathy, chronic joint pain, back and spine pain, and knee and foot pain. With regenerative treatment, their experts will help relieve your pain and achieve a state of health and wellness.



Integrative Rehab Medicine's founder and medical director, Dr. Sebastian, specializes in the spine, musculoskeletal system, and peripheral nerves. He combines his extensive knowledge of Regenerative Medicine, Osteopathy, Physical Rehabilitation, and Integrative Medicine to provide comprehensive treatment strategies.

### **Land Parcel to the north of the Houck Dermatology building.**

A proposed zoning amendment to this land parcel will change the site plan for what is termed "Parcel G East." The change is from the proposed Assisted Living Facility to a mix of self-storage, commercial, and hotel use. The zoning amendment was submitted on January 17, 2024.

### **Lavish Wellness on US 41**



Lavish Wellness Lounge is now open at 19970 S. Tamiami Trail, Estero. The company prides itself on helping clients prioritize their wellness by offering services that will energize them, rejuvenate them, and make them confident!

The services offered include various wellness and aesthetics services, such as IV Vitamin infusions, Medical Weight Loss, Wellness Shots, and Botox and Fillers! They aim to provide safe and effective treatments to help you look your best.

### **Palms Day Care for Early Learners.**

Palms Day School's vision is to instill a lifelong love of learning while igniting curiosity, exploration, and joy in children. They believe all children are filled with wonder. They pledge to create a safe, bespoke learning environment that encourages critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity to empower young learners to thrive in a rapidly evolving world. A day school is a place where curiosity is celebrated, and students are inspired to explore and embrace the joy of the learning journey. The school will be located at 9600 Corkscrew Road, Estero, and will open in 2025.

### **Renovations at the South County Regional Library in Estero**

Lee Board of County Commissioners voted today to award BSSW Architects, Inc. an architectural services contract for renovations to the South County Regional Library. The planned renovations include an automated material handler, upgraded building systems, reconfiguring the interior to serve the public and staff better, ADA upgrades, a new roof, and site improvements. BSSW Architects, Inc. will provide professional architectural, civil, structural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing design services. There will be multiple opportunities for public input during the 11-month design process.

After completing the design and bidding process, the Board will vote on the construction contract at a public meeting. The project is expected to be completed in 2024.

### **Shopping Center East of Corkscrew Shores and South of Corkscrew Rd**

Developers are considering providing retail stores in a parcel of land east of Corkscrew Shores. This parcel is located within unincorporated Lee County, just beyond Corkscrew Shores - also in unincorporated Lee County.

It would help relieve pressure on East Corkscrew Road by reducing the volume of traffic heading west to the stores around Miromar Outlets, Grand Oaks, and University Highlands. When more details are available, we will provide more information.

### **Southwest Florida Proton Center at Estero Parkway and Three Oaks.**

Southwest Florida is set to welcome a cutting-edge cancer treatment facility, the Southwest Florida Proton Center, in early 2025. This 35,000-square-foot medical building, located at the northwest corner of Estero Parkway and Three Oaks Parkway, will be the first of its kind on Florida's West Coast to offer proton therapy, an advanced form of radiation therapy.



The \$80 million project, a joint venture between Advocate Radiation Oncology and Lee Healthcare Holdings (a subsidiary of Lee Health), is expected to be a game-changer for cancer care in the region. Once the complex medical equipment, including the particle accelerator, is installed by the end of 2024, calibrating the machines will take approximately 4-6 months before the first patients can be treated in mid-2025.

### **Spavia Day Spa. Highland Oaks Drive**

Spavia Day Spa opened earlier this year at 19517 Highland Oaks Drive, Suite 410, Estero, FL 33928. It will have a strong presence in Estero’s village community as it welcomes individuals to indulge in various result-driven massage and skin care treatments, facials, body wraps, waxing, lash extensions, and more. Local owner Mark Chandley is spearheading the Spavia Estero location, which is second to his existing Spavia location in Naples, demonstrating his passion for delivering affordable yet high-quality spa services to local community members.

### **Starbucks's New Location Next to Wawa in Lowes Plaza.**

A new Starbucks will be located on a 1.5-acre Parcel on Corkscrew Road next to Wawa.



### **SW Corner of Corkscrew Road & River Ranch Road**

A development order was submitted in January 2024 for COASTAL PALMS ACADEMY to build a 14,700± sq ft daycare and preschool center on 3.84 acres. The company's principal address is 17445 Cabrini Way, Estero.

### **The Goddard School for Early Development -Corner of Quente Way & Three Oaks Parkway.**

Goddard School for Early Development is proposed. The school is planned for the Plaza Del Sol subdivision on the southeast corner of Quente Way and Three Oaks Parkway. It will be a 2-story building of 14,190 sq ft. A 5,910-square-foot fenced-in playground will have on-site parking, drainage, and utility connections. In March 2024, a public information meeting related to development orders occurred. Since the November 2023 PZDB meeting, Goddard’s engineering team has made architectural and design changes based on the board’s suggestions.

**The Old Post Office 8111 Broadway E.** The new owner has submitted proposed changes to the site plans. It was rezoned from AG to a commercially planned development. The development order approved the redevelopment of the 4,800 sq. ft. building.

Earlier this year, a zoning amendment was put forward to the PZDB for revisions to the architectural elevations, the schedule of deviations, and the approval of the uses and conditions. The amendment would allow the applicant to retrofit the existing metal building on-site, relocate their business into half of a





freestanding commercial building, and use the remaining space as office space for other professionals.

Planner Veronica Martin stated in February that the plan included eliminating the nearest driveway to the intersection of U.S. 41, the addition of buffers along all four sides of the property, construction of an ADA-compliant pedestrian facility along Broadway Avenue East, and the addition of a T-turnaround for firetruck access to the rear of the building. The reduction of scheduled uses includes eliminating laundry and dry-cleaning services, restaurants, broadcast studios, and outdoor displays of merchandise uses.

Questions were raised about whether it would be better to demolish the existing building, although David Moore, the architect, said. "Looking at the cost of demolishing the building and completely redeveloping the site, the company can enclose this building much more economically."

The PZDB ultimately recommended that the applicant incorporate more color, bring enhanced renderings, and meet with the residential neighbor to discuss concerns before returning for a public hearing. Approval was given in May with conditions. (Photo Credit: Katuska Carrillo)

### **The Shoppes at University Highlands off Ben Hill Griffin Parkway**

The property is on Ben Hill Griffin Parkway north of Everblades Parkway, North and east of Tiburon Way, part of the Timberland & Tiburon MPD/DRI. A development Order to build two buildings on a portion of the vacant 6.37-acre site is in place. Each building would include four units and a total of 7,800 square feet. There is no news yet on what stores or uses will be made of the space when complete.

The Shoppes at University Highlands have applied for a development order to add a one-story, 7,300-square-foot commercial building on a vacant parcel on the west side of Ben Hill Griffin Parkway just north of Miromar Outlets. The new facility will have 6,000 square feet of retail space and a 1,300-square-foot restaurant. It's the fifth building for University Highlands, which includes 14 acres of retail, a hotel, and office properties.

### **Walmart on US 41 in Estero**

Approval was given in October to allow Walmart to add a ± 5,800 square foot addition to the existing 186,404 square foot building to accommodate storage for online pickup orders. The project also includes reconfiguring the parking area where the addition is being constructed. The expansion will provide additional storage space for online orders, including refrigeration and a freezer section for cold items that customers may order online. Improvements include parking, traffic signage, and landscaping on-site.

## **Wawa Convenience Food & Beverage Store with Gas Development**

Despite the delays, progress is being made to build this popular company on Corkscrew Road in the Lowes Plaza. The existing structure (Ruby Tuesdays) has been cleared.



The 5,537-square-foot Wawa with 12 fueling pumps and a monument sign is proposed on the south side of Corkscrew Road on the parcel previously occupied by Ruby Tuesday in the Lowe' s-anchored retail center. Improvements proposed are parking, signage, trash enclosure, and landscaping. There will be two accesses: the already existing right turn-in only from eastbound Corkscrew Road and full access to the south from Three Oaks Parkway.

The site will be reconfigured to provide for vehicular & pedestrian traffic, parking, and landscaping. Approval was given for the minor amendment for the height of lighting features under the gas canopy to 21.53 feet, a minor amendment for the sign setback to be 10 feet instead of 15 feet with the preference of the taller sign if Lowes's approves the sign and replacing Cypress trees on Corkscrew Road with oaks or another species approved by staff.

Although it was hoped that the company would open in 2024, no specific opening date has been provided on the Wawa website.

## **10-acre site on US 41 in front of Rapallo- Marketplace at Coconut Point**

Building Permits are under review for Miller's Ale House & McDonald's, which are proposed for the site. The site plan sets a McDonald's on the north end of the property closest to Rapallo Residents and sets the Miller's Ale House at the south end. Jim Wallace, a Village Planning, Zoning, and Design Board member, agreed with residents to flip the location of these businesses to cause the most minor inconvenience to neighbors.

The site plan includes a 30-foot landscape buffer along Via Rapallo Drive. Additional internal landscaping has been added between the north drive-thru building and the eastern property line to reduce noise. The Village Planning, Zoning, And Design Board approved the development 4-3.

The property is located along the east side of So. Tamiami Trail and US 41 have excellent visibility and accessibility. Leases have already been signed with Miller Ale House, McDonald's, and Noire the Nail Bar. "We are very proud to bring this high-end development that addresses everyday needs to Estero and compliments the already magnificent shopping experience within Coconut Point. The space within our development is going quickly, but we currently have several amazing

opportunities available,” said Jeffrey Williams, Executive Vice President of Development and Construction of Konover South.

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Engage Estero is an all-volunteer, nonpolitical, nonprofit Community Engagement Association.

Our purpose is to inform citizens of significant community issues and encourage citizen engagement to impact the quality of life in greater Estero favorably.

Our vision is to have an informed and engaged citizenry, resulting in a community that delivers the desired quality of life.

**"Be Informed, Get Engaged, and Make an Impact!"**



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