

**RURAL NEIGHBORHOODS** *Building Livable Places for Working Families* 

## 2016-2020

For more information, or to get involved in EP<sup>2</sup>,

contact us at:

RURAL NEIGHBORHOODS BUILDING LIVABLE PLACES FOR WORKING FAMILIES

19308 SW 380th Street, Post Office Box 343529 Florida City, FL 33034 305.242.2142

WWW.RURALNEIGHBORHOODS.ORG



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	1
EP2: Our Vision	5
Overview of Plan & Process	
Planning Process	3
Eden Park-Esperanza Place Community: Yesterday and Today10	)
Eden Park-Esperanza Place 13	
Community Profile. 14	
People	
Place	
Systems	3
Goals & Strategies	
Physical Environment	
Education and Youth	
Healthy Lifestyles & Environment	
Resident Engagement	8
Implementation Plan40	)
Appendix	5

S

# LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Target Area	13
Figure 2:	Land Use	16
Figure 3:	Assets	17
Figure 4:	Residential Uses	18
Figure 5:	Housing Tenure	19
Figure 6:	Mobile Home Parks & Migrant Camps	19
Figure 7:	Housing Conditions	21
Figure 8:	Streetlights	22
Appendi	x (includes full-size copies of all maps)	45

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



### **Our Partners**

4

In our endeavor to form a collective vision for the future of Eden Park-Esperanza Place, we have benefited greatly from the good will and collaboration of residents and community stakeholders who participated in interviews, meetings and round-table discussions; groups of volunteers who canvassed the community; and partners who hosted us in their locations. Thank you. The long-term benefits that will result from this work would not exist without their time and commitment.

Our special thanks to the national, state and local funding partners who have invested in recent EP<sup>2</sup> neighborhood projects or this plan.

**EP<sup>2</sup> National Partners:** City Real Estate Advisors; Community Housing Capital; Enterprise Community Partners; Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta; Local Initiative Support Corporation; NeighborWorks America; U.S.

Department of Agriculture Rural Development; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

**EP<sup>2</sup> State and Local Partners:** BankUnited; Blue Zones Project of Southwest Florida; Catholic Charities; Coalition of Florida Farmworker Organizations; Community Foundation of Collier County; Collier County Government; Empowerment Alliance of Southwest Florida; EnFamilia; Fifth Third Bank; Florida Department of Health – Immokalee Office; Florida Housing Finance Corporation; Habitat for Humanity of Collier County; Healthcare Network of Southwest Florida; Immokalee Housing and Family Services; Redlands Christian Migrant Association; Shelter for Abused Women and Children; Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council; The Immokalee Foundation; University of Florida IFAS.

#### **Residents and Other Individual Contributors:**

Fanny Abundez Maricela Aburto Jessica Abrigo Maria Adame Fernando Aguilar *Connie Aguirre* Sherley Alexandre Lucina Alvarado Maria Alvarado Agustina Amarcy Adriana Antonio Pedro Arviza Hanniel Jean Baptiste Jean Isna Baptiste Christie Betancourt Marina Brito Patti Calderón Hermelinda Campos Mayra Cárdenas Agatha Carelus Sandra Castillo Jean Chevery Floréis Colín Manitú Colín Nadege Colín Santos Conrado Dottie Cook Magdalena Cortez Melinda Cortez Alfredo León Cruz Maria De Jesús Maria Díaz Maura Díaz

Rosa Díaz lean Dennis Micaela Dosal Marie Dilcus Mislande Elius Ricardo Estrada Djamyrla Etienne Lewis Eugene Marie Eugene Chantal Experiencia Sonia Felizan Frank Fernández Eileen Flanagan Oralia Ferretiz Lillie Flores Martina Fonseca Marie Fortune Eurika Jean Francios Ionite Francios Rosa Frías Suzanne Fundingsland Maria Fundora Marcela Galván Lorena Gaspar Irma Garcia Leoba Antonio Garcia Lucina Garcia Zenaida Garcia Deborah Garza Eva Garza Samantha Garza Sanluana Garza Susan Golden

Berta Gómez Graciela Gómez losefa Gómez Edelia González Antonia Fuertes Guerig Paulette Guerrel Cindy Guido Daisy Gutierrez Maria Gutierrez Cirila Guzmán Maria Luisa Hadez Rebekah Harp Juan Serna Herrera Flda Hernández Grábela Hernández Gilberto Hernández Lorena Hernández Marcela Hernández Maria Hernández Reyna Hernández Rose Hernández Resendiz Hlinda Ted Hoffman Andrea Holman Francis lackson Maria Jarquin Greg Jiménez Lenor Jiménez Natasha Joseph Dieucila Josselin Maria A. Juárez Jerry Kennedy Annie Lara

Flizabeth Lazará Claudia Léavano Mark Lemke Maria Loeza Adriana Lopez Angela Lopez Áreme Lopez Karen Lopez Magda Louis Aurelia Lucas Andrea Luis Maria del Rosario Luna Elizabeth Malagan Florentino Maldonado Mubu Marc losé Marín Dora Martínez Elia Martínez Francisco Martínez Petra Martínez Selina Martínez Fthel Mata Josie Means Alicia Mendoza Erika Mendoza Rebeca Mendoza Irma Monte Jesús Montelongo Danilo Morales Michele Mosca loe Mucha Bradley Muckel Inocencia Muñoz

Melissa Nemon Olga Nevarez Angélica Newly Lisa Nieto Rosa Nito Elia Núñez Lucy Ortiz Gloria Padilla Ivelisse Pagan Adeling Perez Arianelys Perez Humberto Perez Lorena Perez Lusvi Perez Nancy Perez Terveus Jean Phippe Robert Plaisir Nidia Polanco Jannette Ponce Rosa Pulido Antonia Ramos Monica Reves Nancy Reves Miquel Reynoso Crvstal Rico Antonia Ríos Theodore Richecarde Maria Rodríguez Peggy Rodríguez Verónica Rodríguez Maria Elena Roias Dennis Roman Priscilla Roman

Daphnie Romulus Rafaela Rosado Fegler Rousseau luan Ruiz Silvia Sabanilla Zitlalitl Salazar Maria Salazar lames Sainvilus Candelaria Salgado Daniel Salls Mercedes Sanchez Pedro Sánchez Pascuala Santana Zayabel Santiago Condado Santos Flva Santos Sophia Serano Juan Serno Steven Lopez Silvero Maria Soto Beth Stark Sarah Sturtevant Michael Taylor Maria Trejo Francisca Trujillo Luciano Urbina Maria Valentin Martha Venegas Rosa Maria Victoria John Vinton Tim Walker Samantha Watson Andrea Winters

# **EP<sup>2</sup>: OUR VISION**

Eden Park - Esperanza Place is a welcoming, up and coming neighborhood where people are hardworking and independent. It is a place replete with families and children and steeped in Latino and Haitian culture.



## EP<sup>2</sup>: People, Values and Culture

## **OVERVIEW OF PLAN & PROCESS**

Our Eden Park-Esperanza Place (EP<sup>2</sup>) neighborhood is home to an estimated 7,400 residents within the rural, agricultural community of Immokalee, Florida. Located an hour east of the larger coastal cities of Naples and Fort Myers, Immokalee is known for the fresh fruits and vegetables it grows and supplies to the country. Our community has a diverse population resulting from the agricultural uses which brought many Latinos and Haitians to the area to work in the fields and packing houses. Today, our community still draws first-generation immigrants seeking a better life for themselves and their families.

In 2015, NeighborWorks America provided a Stable Communities Catalytic Grant to Rural Neighborhoods (RN) to fund the creation of this EP<sup>2</sup> Revitalization Plan for our northwestern neighborhood in Immokalee. RN is a non-profit housing and community development organization with more than 1,700 units of affordable housing. RN seeks not only to provide safe, decent housing, but also a sense of place both in and around its rental communities. Both RN and NeighborWorks America recognize that physical developments alone are not enough to build a community. Rather it takes residents and community stakeholders working together to build a safe, livable place with a bright future.

Our EP<sup>2</sup> Revitalization Plan: Mi Casa - Kominote M puts on paper the many ideas and goals that residents and stakeholders share for Eden Park - Esperanza Place. Based on resident priorities, there are four focus areas in which we acknowledge the challenges we face and the concrete steps we must take to transform our community. These focus areas include: physical environment (*place*), resident engagement (*people*), education and youth (people), and healthy lifestyles (*systems*).







### **Planning Process**

The EP<sup>2</sup> Revitalization Plan: Mi Casa - Kominote M is a product of hard work and creative thinking by hundreds of residents and dozens of community leaders and organizations working for more than a year. It is a collaborative vision for our community.

Background work on the plan began in March 2015 with an exterior building condition survey of several primary neighborhoods in the EP<sup>2</sup> target area. It continued with the collection of market and background data from stakeholders and other participants.

Resident engagement began in July 2015 with residents invited to participate through several outreach initiatives, some of which included meeting in small groups or individually to discuss their likes and dislikes about our community. Interviews were also conducted with residents at community events to gather their input. Over 140 residents participated in these events and completed surveys identifying their neighborhood concerns and priorities for change.

Representatives from twenty EP<sup>2</sup> stakeholder organizations also participated in the planning process through a similar approach in which local leaders gathered to discuss the assets and challenges of our neighborhood. Many of the same ideas and concerns were expressed by residents and stakeholders alike. Background data also supported the challenges that were raised and the gaps to be addressed. Small working groups formed around each focus area to develop ideas for addressing the needs. The groups then transformed these ideas into the action strategies included in our plan.

Implementation of some strategies began as early as September 2015 as shown in the graphic below. Taking action allowed residents to see that their voices were heard and their ideas valued. It also encouraged greater participation in our planning efforts as residents took ownership of the strategies and invited other friends and neighbors to get involved.

As we turn now to implementation of the strategies, these same residents and stakeholders will be instrumental in ensuring success. Through hard work, EP<sup>2</sup> will become the community we collectively envision it to be.





## EDEN PARK-ESPERANZA PLACE COMMUNITY: YESTERDAY & TODAY

## Immokalee's History

Immokalee has maintained its rural character over the years. The area was first inhabited by the Calusa Indians, followed centuries later by the Seminoles. Although hunters, ranchers, missionaries, and Indian traders traveled through the area, the first permanent settlement did not occur until 1872. The settlers eventually opened a post office and changed the name in 1897 from Allen's Place to Immokalee, a name translated from a Seminole word meaning "my home".

The population grew slowly until the Atlantic Coast Line Railway extended its service from Sebring, south to Immokalee, in 1921 allowing for trade and communication. The area



benefited again in 1923 when Collier County was formed and Barron G. Collier undertook the construction of a paved road and rail line from Immokalee to the County seat at Everglades City.

In the ensuing years, Immokalee's ranching and farming industries grew. Lumber became big business in the 1930s and many African Americans who had worked in lumber mills elsewhere, moved to Immokalee to work in the lumberyards.

Railroad Station

Over time agriculture expanded to become the area's primary business. Carlene Thissen writes of the agricultural growth and the different cultural groups it attracted in her book, *Immokalee's Fields of Hope*. She explains that production began expanding in the 1950s, but didn't really take off until Castro took over American-owned agricultural businesses in Cuba in 1959. Local production then expanded more quickly



and packing houses opened to package and ship produce as the U.S. enacted a Cuba trade embargo shutting off winter food imports. Soon word spread that there was work in Immokalee. When Mexican Americans living in Texas learned that Immokalee was paying a dollar more per day (\$6 a day) than in Texas, they moved to Immokalee.

But still more workers were needed and many came from Mexico under a program



called the Labor Importation Program of 1942-1964, known as the Bracero program. Some planned to return to Mexico once their contract ended, but many received "green cards" allowing them to remain in the U.S. The Mexican workers lived initially in barracks or housing at the fields, but eventually began moving into town. Like in most communities at that time, discrimination existed and residents lived in different parts of town based on race.

Packing houses helped fuel the agricultural growth since growers could package their produce quickly and ship it to stores. Today, Immokalee remains one of the top producers in the U.S. for tomatoes, along with other vegetables and citrus.



Another wave of immigrants came in the early 1980s when Haitian workers began migrating to Immokalee and other places in Florida to escape the harsh treatment at home from political leaders. Though some initially worked in the fields, most quickly moved to the packing houses to sort and pack vegetables for shipping.

In the past when the annual harvest ended, families often packed up and moved to follow the crops. Immokalee, however, became a common home-base for families who returned year after year. Over time, mothers began staying home so children could finish the school year, leaving only the fathers to travel with the crops. This began the process of "settling out" of the migrant stream as Immokalee became a true home for families. Eventually, those children grew up in Immokalee, creating a second and third generation that work in the community today in a variety of jobs. More families continue to come, however, just as the earlier ones did in search of new and better opportunities.



### Eden Park-Esperanza Place

Our EP<sup>2</sup> neighborhood is located in the northwest section of Immokalee and includes 7,335 residents. EP<sup>2</sup> is about 2.4 square miles in size and is primarily residential in nature. The sole commercial corridor is along State Road 29, EP<sup>2</sup>'s eastern boundary, and along Lake Trafford Road.

The EP<sup>2</sup> neighborhood encompasses a number of smaller communties. One of these is Eden Park in the northwestern quadrant. Phases 1 and 2 were platted in 1960 and 1962 by Fred Edenfield and his wife, Mae. Many Latino families settled into the new subdivision with its fruit-named streets that range from Apple to Tangerine. Older residents tell us they felt safe in that community and enjoyed living there because it was primarily Latino families who looked out for each other. Many of the initial homes were made of



inexpensive materials that were roughly put together to provide shelter for families. Over time they have been rebuilt, but today, houses in the area still include small wood-framed homes or trailers, many of which are in need of substantial repair.

Surrounding Eden Park are other small developments and communities. Some are market-rate housing while others were constructed by Habitat for Humanity.

The Esperanza Place portion of the EP<sup>2</sup> neighborhood centers around the Esperanza Place housing development on Immokalee Drive. The neighborhoods in this area include single-family homes, trailer parks, and migrant camps. Many of the single family homes are in good shape, but the trailers show signs of wear.



# **COMMUNITY PROFILE: People**

## **Population**

The population of EP<sup>2</sup> increased almost 25% over the last 12 years to 7,335 in 2012. The population increase was fueled by the number of new housing units built here - nearly two-thirds of all new units in Immokalee. The 1,422 households in EP<sup>2</sup> have an average size of 5.2 persons per household which is double Florida's average of 2.6 persons per household.

Not surprisingly, the larger household size results from more children in EP<sup>2</sup> than in other communities. Approximately 35% of our population is under the age of 18, compared to 21% in Florida as a whole. Conversely, EP<sup>2</sup> has fewer elderly residents with only 5% being age 65 or older. This is significantly smaller than the typical trend in our retirement state where 18% of the population is age 65 or older. Given Immokalee's large influx of immigrants over the years, our population remains diverse today. In 2010, 41% of our population was foreign born and 80% reported speaking a language other than English at home. Our Latino population, which makes up 81% of the EP<sup>2</sup> population (compared to 22% in the state), is largely of Mexican descent, though some hail from other Spanish-speaking countries such as Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Puerto Rico.

Unfortunately, many immigrants were unable to complete school in their home countries, making reading and writing difficult. In 2010, only 36% of our residents had a high school degree or higher, compared to 86% for Florida. Only 4% of EP<sup>2</sup> residents had a bachelor's degree or higher while 26% in Florida did.



Demographic information was compiled by Policy Map and is for 2012 unless noted. Policy Map uses Census data to prepare estimates for designated areas, like EP<sup>2</sup>.

The 2012 estimates are provided by the Census' American Community Survey, 2008-2012. The data cover portions of Census Tracts 113.01 and 113.02.

# **COMMUNITY PROFILE**

### "42% of our population is below the poverty level, more than double the percentage in Florida as a whole..."

The low education levels limit job opportunities and force many into low-paying jobs in agriculture or other sectors. In the EP<sup>2</sup> target area, 25% of our population is employed in agriculture, forestry, fishing or hunting, compared to only 1% working in this sector across Florida as a whole. The next largest sectors in EP<sup>2</sup> are construction (13%), health care and social assistance (10%), and administrative and support services (10%). Due to the predominance of work in agriculture and other lower paying sectors, 42% of our population is below the poverty level, more than double the percentage in Florida as a whole.

Despite the low education levels, our residents are entrepreneurial in nature, often finding ways to supplement their incomes. Some include cooking, making or selling things, or helping with odd jobs to earn extra cash.

EP<sup>2</sup>'s civic leadership has largely been handled by a small group of individuals. Residents are reluctant to get involved due to language barriers, time constraints, or doubt that they can have an impact. Instead, many like the physical separation from coastal Collier County, its oversight and the independence it brings. Yet within EP<sup>2</sup>, residents are well connected through family and friends.

Immokalee's population is changing over time as second and third generation residents graduate from high school, gain employment in the area, and become active in guiding its future. They have overcome barriers faced by new immigrants and now own small businesses, are involved in churches and other social groups, and participate in the Chamber of Commerce. Continuing to widen this net, include more residents, and strengthen leadership skills is our challenge.

**OCCUPATION** 



AGRICULTURE, FOR	ESTRY, FISHING & HUNTING	25
ADMIN /SUPPORT		10
CONSTRUCTION		13
EDUCATION		8
FOOD/HOTEL		8
HEALTH CARE		10
WHOLESALE -		7
RETAIL		8
OTHER	· · _ · _ · _ · _ · _ · _ · _	12

# **COMMUNITY PROFILE: Place**

Eden Park-Esperanza Place's main land use is residential (single family, multifamily, and mobile homes) which accounts for just over half (51%) of all acreage in our area. The next largest land use category is open space (agricultural, preserve/non-agricultural, vacant commercial, and vacant residential) which comprises 42% of EP<sup>2</sup>'s acreage. Commercial activity accounts for only 3% of the acreage and is limited to two corridors: SR 29 which forms the eastern boundary of EP<sup>2</sup> and Lake Trafford Road near its intersection with SR 29. The commercial activity is largely retail, food, or service-related. Government/Institutional use



makes up the remaining 4% of the acreage and includes schools, churches, and other government-owned facilities. No manufacturing exists within the EP<sup>2</sup> area.

Accounting for 42% of all acreage in Eden Park-Esperanza Place, open space and the rural feeling of the neighborhood represent one of the things residents reported liking most about our community. The other top things according to the survey included having friends, family and work nearby and the quality of the public schools. Both elementary schools within EP<sup>2</sup> are relatively new and offer strong educational and after school programs.

Residents predominantly said they would recommend EP<sup>2</sup> as a good place to live and over 70% felt it would improve some or a lot in the next five years. Other physical features people listed as assets for EP<sup>2</sup> are shown in Figure 3.



Arrowhead Reserves

## Housing in Immokalee

Residential is the primary land use in EP<sup>2</sup> as Figure 4 indicates. Single-family homes and multi-family units consume almost the same amount of land at 20% and 19%, respectively. Mobile homes cover 12% of the acreage in EP<sup>2</sup>.

Immokalee has long struggled with a lack of safe, affordable housing. The community developed largely under its own set of rules due to the geographic

separation between Immokalee and the rest of Collier County. Long-term residents relayed that many of the initial homes built in the 1960s and 1970s were pieced together by residents using whatever materials they had available. Some of this ingenuity remains today with residents finding creative, affordable ways to patch and repair their homes.

Mobile or manufactured homes make up just under half (46%) of all housing units in EP<sup>2</sup> and most are more than 20 years old.



#### LEGEND

📃 Mobile Homes

- Multi-family
- Single Family Residential Vacant Residential



Yet, the shortage of safe, decent homes continues and forces many residents into older, substandard trailers. Mobile or manufactured homes make up just under half (46%) of the 2,085 housing units in EP<sup>2</sup> with many trailers over 20 years old.

Ownership of the trailers is mixed with some residents owning both trailer and land, others renting both, and still others owning their trailers but paying rent on the land. This mix of ownership makes strategies to improve or repair the mobile

#### LEGEND

Owner Occupied
 Renter Occupied
 Non-Residential/Vacant



home stock challenging. Figure 5 attempts to identify tenure (owner versus renter) for all residential uses in EP<sup>2</sup> using the Property Appraiser's Homestead Exemption data.

Some mobile homes are also situated in registered migrant camps or mobile home parks. EP<sup>2</sup> includes 14 mobile home parks (with space for 374 units) and 11 migrant camps (with space for 308 residents) as shown in Figure 6. Each is inspected by the Florida Department of Health to ensure safe and sanitary

#### LEGEND

- Migrant Camp & Mobile Home Park
  Migrant Camp
- Mobile Home Parks



living conditions. Mobile home parks are inspected twice annually while those designated as migrant camps are inspected every six weeks.

Given the magnitude of the housing problem, a number of for-profit and nonprofit organizations have created new housing opportunities to reduce demand for older units. Rental communities constructed in the EP<sup>2</sup> area during the last 15 years added 462 new rental units for low-income households.



Over the same period, homeownership opportunities have greatly expanded raising the homeownership rate to 46% within the EP<sup>2</sup> area, largely due to the efforts of Habitat for Humanity. Together, approximately 700 homeownership units were constructed during the past 15 years, with all except those at the Arrowhead Planned Unit Development targeted at low-income households. Arrowhead Reserves is the community's first market-rate subdivision.

But Immokalee did not escape the impacts of the Great Recession that started in 2007. As homeowners lost their jobs, they could no longer afford their mortgages resulting in a large number of distressed sales or foreclosures. In Jubilation and Arrowhead Reserves, 35% and 85% of the units, respectively, were lost through economic upheaval. Large percentages of these homes were sold at substantially reduced prices to investors who now rent the units (25% in Jubilation and 33% in Arrowhead). Today, however, Immokalee's economy is slowly turning around with residents pursuing homeownership again as new construction begins at Arrowhead and continues at Habitat for Humanity communities. Aside from these two builders, however, home ownership choices are limited.



Recent market studies conducted in 2015 and available at www. ruralneighborhoods.org, indicate a slow absorption rate for potential new units. The studies put the absorption rates at roughly 10 units per month for rental and 2 units per year for homeownership. Both types of housing would need to target lower income families and in the case of rental, be free of farmworker occupational restrictions.

Over 460 rental units and 700 homeownership units were built in EP<sup>2</sup> in the past 15 years. The other housing challenge Immokalee faces, is that of maintaining its existing housing stock. Given the prevalence of low-income households, repairs are difficult. Several countywide rehab programs exist, but gaining access and getting families qualified for them is a challenge. Ensuring that area landlords adequately maintain units offered for rent is a related but separate issue.

Trained volunteers conducted a housing condition survey in Eden Park in March 2015. The volunteers evaluated individual housing units by looking at exterior housing components such as doors, windows, and roofs while also incorporating exterior factors like litter, overgrown trees, and the condition of accessory buildings such as sheds. Approximately 12% of Eden Park's units were classified as substandard. Unfortunately, Eden Park remains the most distressed sector in the EP<sup>2</sup> neighborhood.



#### LEGEND

- Adequate/Needs Minor Repairs
- Needs Repairs
- Substandard
- Severely Substandard

## Crime

The Sheriff's Office issued an updated crime report in 2014. The report focused on where robberies occurred as an indicator of the area's safety and possible need for lighting. The majority of the robberies both in a prior 2005-2006 study and in the updated report covering 2012-2013, occurred in the southern part of Immokalee, well outside the EP<sup>2</sup> neighborhood. This is an area where many unaccompanied migrant workers live and carry cash when they walk, thus making them easy targets. Although some robberies occurred in EP<sup>2</sup>, many were along busy streets with few in the residential areas.

Drug and criminal activity is perceived as a problem especially within the Eden Park sector. Residents report feeling unsafe on their streets and are fearful of having their children walk home alone from their bus stops. Residents have identified this issue as one to be addressed so they can feel safe in their neighborhood.

## Parks & Open Space

The lack of parks in our community was raised repeatedly. While some apartment complexes have playgrounds or tot lots, there is a lack of public park space within the EP<sup>2</sup> neighborhood. The only facilities that exist are the baseball fields off Little League Road and the soccer field at Eden Park Elementary. Most residents in the EP<sup>2</sup> area are two or more miles from the County owned pool, community center and ball fields. In a community where many residents lack cars, transportation to these facilities is difficult and often time-consuming depending on bus schedules.

The Collier County Parks and Recreation Department recognizes the shortage of parks in our area and is currently seeking land for a future park in the EP<sup>2</sup> neighborhood. Even once land is purchased though, construction will still take several years due to funding needs.

### Infrastructure

Aside from the housing issue, other important infrastructure concerns include roads, sidewalks, lighting, and drainage. The Immokalee Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) has been active in this area undertaking several projects to improve the roads, drainage and sidewalks. The primary issues related to roads are focused on safety and include installation of speed dampening devices and stoplights to help control vehicles. These items are addressed in the strategies.

Sidewalks are an important issue with many streets having one sidewalk (sometimes poorly constructed) or no sidewalk at all. Often existing sidewalks are adjacent to open swales which can be hazardous to pedestrians. Given the large number of pedestrians, improving walkability in our community is extremely important.

The Appendix includes several maps reproduced from the 2011 Immokalee Walkable Community Study prepared by RWA, Inc. for the Collier County Metropolitan Planning Organization. The maps show existing sidewalks, bus routes and prioritized sidewalk improvements. Since the plan was prepared, sidewalks have been added along Immokalee Drive and Carson Road.

Another important factor in community walkability is streetlights. The Immokalee Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU) handles the majority of new streetlights in Immokalee. Most new ones are placed in the commercial areas of town, though some have been installed in southern Immokalee where crime statistics showed a need for increased lighting. Several areas of EP<sup>2</sup> have limited lighting, especially Carson Road which lacks streetlights but has school bus stops in early morning darkness. Residents also cite Immokalee Drive, Westclox Road, and Eden Park as areas in need of more lighting.



Public transportation is also important and the CAT (Collier Area Transit) Bus is a popular option for residents lacking cars. Local government recently received grants to improve some of the bus stops in the neighborhood. The County also conducted a survey and held meetings attended by EP<sup>2</sup> residents to identify additional bus needs in the community.

Drainage is another element with much of Immokalee's stormwater system consisting of ditches and open swales that were constructed prior to today's design standards. Some of the roadside swales and ditches in the older neighborhoods and commercial areas have filled in over time or are cluttered with debris, limiting their effectiveness to retain and/or convey excess stormwater. The inefficiency of the stormwater system, coupled with newer developments that have altered historical surface water sheet flows, have contributed to localized drainage problems in portions of the community.

The staff of the Big Cypress Basin and the Collier County Stormwater Management staff completed a Stormwater Master Plan in 2005 and the Immokalee Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) staff is coordinating with the County to update the Plan. Some of the trouble areas identified in that Plan fall within the EP<sup>2</sup> target area, which include drainage problems along Westclox Road, Lake Trafford Road, Immokalee Drive, and the Fish Creek area.

In recent years, stormwater improvements have been made along Immokalee Drive. County staff is identifying potential stormwater treatment pond sites to address stormwater issues affecting the Fish Creek area and Lake Trafford Road, as well as other areas within the community. The CRA staff and Advisory Board have identified additional areas that experience localized flooding, including sections of Eden Park and Carson Road in the EP<sup>2</sup> area.

The County is presently inventorying stormwater infrastructure throughout the Immokalee community. This information will be mapped and used to support and prioritize stormwater projects identified in the Stormwater Master Plan update, expected to be completed by the end of 2016. The County will use this Plan to seek grants and other funds to address stormwater infrastructure needs and flooding in Immokalee.

## Local Community Systems

Immokalee's primary organizations pushing for change are the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and the Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU). Supported through Tax Increment Financing (TIF) dollars, the CRA and MSTU have been hard hit by the recession and must rely largely on grants for projects. Nevertheless, its staff and local Advisory Boards have been persistent in pushing for improvements for the community. The CRA and MSTU are supported by

other active civic groups such as the Chamber of Commerce which encourages residents to get involved. Gradually, these groups are attracting new residents and business owners to the table.

Immokalee is blessed with a large number of social service agencies that work well together to address needs in the community. Few groups have overlapping missions and most are willing to share information and collaborate with one another.

County government has recently begun providing more attention and staff resources to Immokalee. While there is much work to be done, the positive support is encouraging. Immokalee also receives good press coverage and support from its local paper, *Immokalee Bulletin*, as well as the County paper, *Naples Daily News*. The latter has been instrumental in raising awareness of specific Immokalee concerns with the broader County population.



The CRA's recent \$3.5 million investment in Immokalee Drive addressed drainage issues and added sidewalks.

# **GOALS AND STRATEGIES**



## Physical Environment

**Goal:** EP<sup>2</sup> is an attractive, livable community that offers a variety of safe, affordable housing opportunities for its residents.

### Why It's Important.

A neighborhood's physical environment is fundamental to the quality of life residents in the neighborhood experience. Physical environment includes elements that impact the livability of the neighborhood like infrastructure, transportation, housing, streetscapes, and parks. The physical environment is a critical element because it not only impacts quality of life, it also provides evidence of whether people are investing in the neighborhood and conditions are improving. Enhancing the physical environment means making EP<sup>2</sup> safer, more appealing, and more livable. It helps residents feel good about their neighborhood, foster social interactions, improve resident health and encourage financial investment.

The strategies in this section relate to infrastructure, housing, and community appearance. Since many residents lack cars, ensuring the community is safe for walking, bicycling, and using public transit is key. This involves having good sidewalks, streetlights, and safe bus stops. The transportation challenges also raise the need for more parks and recreational facilities within EP<sup>2</sup> since most residents are more than two miles from the Community Park and the Sports Complex (the main park facilities in Immokalee).

In terms of housing, EP<sup>2</sup> faces significant challenges. Though much of the housing stock is new thanks to Habitat for Humanity, Jubilation and Arrowhead, there is still much work to be done. Within EP<sup>2</sup>, 2,085 housing units exist, 46% of which are mobile or manufactured homes. Some are located in migrant camps or mobile home parks that are inspected by the Florida Department of Health while others are privately owned on individual lots throughout the community. Yet the County's rehabilitation program can only be used for owners of single-family homes, not mobile homes or trailers. This means many lowincome families lack the resources to repair their homes.

Last, residents and stakeholders have commented on the appearance of the community and the amount of litter and debris found along streets and in neighborhoods. Addressing this problem will require significant resident involvement.







### PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT EARLY ACHIEVEMENTS



#### Taking Back Our Streets

Our EP<sup>2</sup> Community Clean-up in partnership with Collier County Code Enforcement and Sheriff's Office collected more than 46 tons of debris from Eden Park. Local volunteers focused on homes along North Orange Street to perform yardwork and remove debris.

### 1. IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC SPACE TO MAKE EP<sup>2</sup> A SAFE, LIVABLE COMMUNITY.

## Infrastructure

- **1.1** *Add new streetlights to make EP<sup>2</sup> safer.* As the streetlight map in Figure 8 shows, many places within EP<sup>2</sup> lack adequate streetlights, thereby creating areas that are unsafe for walking after dark. Work with the CRA, MSTU, County, and other partners to seek funding for improvements. Initial focus areas will include Carson Road, Westclox Street and other areas with intersections or school bus stops nearby.
- **1.2** Develop a resident-based volunteer group to identify and report streetlight outages. Provide training and support to local residents to help individuals gain skills in civic engagement and an understanding about how neighborhood improvements can occur. Empower volunteers to work with MSTU members to periodically monitor streetlights and report non-working fixtures to LCEC for repair. Information will also be provided to residents on how to report outages on-line.
- **1.3** *Improve drainage to prevent property damage and ensure resident safety.* Work with Collier County and the Immokalee CRA to improve drainage around Fish Creek, Westclox Road, Lake Trafford Road and Apple Street. Help educate residents on ways to ensure they do not block drainage on their site. If necessary, organize resident volunteer groups to monitor drain blockages throughout the neighborhood and assist neighbors who need help in eliminating the blockages.



Some neighborhoods lack adequate drainage. The County is updating its Stormwater Master Plan from 2005. The plan identifies needed drainage improvements and will be used to secure funding.

26

### **Transportation**

- **1.4** *Improve walkability in the community*. The MPO's 2011 Immokalee Walkable Community Study identified several pathway segments in the EP<sup>2</sup> area as Tier 1 (top priority), Tier 2 (mid priority) or Tier 3 (low priority) projects. The Tier 1 projects have been completed. New efforts will focus on funding for Tier 2 and 3 projects including sidewalks on Carson Road running north from Westclox to Carson Lakes Subdivision and sidewalks in Eden Park.
- **1.5** *Evaluate techniques to make vehicular travel safer for drivers and pedestrians.* Priortize the installation of a stoplight at Westclox Street and SR 29. Encourage traffic calming measures or additional speed enforcement by the Sheriff's Office on streets such as Carson Road, Westclox Street, Eden Avenue, Immokalee Road and Lake Trafford, all of which have large numbers of students walking to and from school and bus stops.
- **1.6** Work with the County to improve the location and condition of bus stops in Immokalee. Presently, few CAT stops have cement pads, benches or shelters. Work with the County to pursue funding to upgrade these facilities. Ensure the locations of stops are adequate. Help residents voice their public transit needs to County staff. Seek neighborhood co-branding opportunities at bus shelters.



### **Open Space**

**1.7** *Identify potential sites for new parks.* Continue working with the County's Parks & Recreation Department, CRA, and other partners to identify and pursue funding for a new park facility within the EP<sup>2</sup> area. Engage residents on park site and usage criteria and priorities.



Besides small playgrounds at rental complexes like the one shown above, EP<sup>2</sup> currently has only two baseball fields and one soccer field for residents. County officials are seeking land and funding to add new recreational facilities in the area.

### Housing Supply

### 2. EXPAND AND IMPROVE THE SUPPLY OF SAFE, AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

2.1 Encourage the supply of safe, affordable rental, homeownership, and special needs units to meet Immokalee's housing needs. Work with developers and the County to ensure County policies and programs support the development of new units. Extend the payback period for downpayment and/or impact fee assistance programs to eliminate "balloon" payments for homeowners.



*Affordable developments by Rural Neighborhoods and Habitat for Humanity of Collier County bring new rental and homeownership opportunities to residents.* 

### Homebuyer Preparation

**2.2** *Provide financial literacy training for renters and future homeowners.* Work with HELP and other groups to provide residents assistance in budgeting, credit repair, and preparing for homeownership.

## Improving Existing Housing Stock

- **2.3** *Help homeowners repair their homes.* Collier County offers a rehab program for homeowners, but the application process can be challenging for some residents. Alert families of available rehab programs and assist them in applying for help.
- 2.4 Seekfunding, partners, and volunteers to develop a rehab program for homeowners who do not qualify for the existing programs. Such programs could be used to help homeowners in mobile homes or who otherwise do not qualify for other repair programs. Expand this program to incorporate community volunteers and College Spring Break students.



**2.5** Work with the local partners to develop strategies for improving the condition of mobile homes. The County has adopted changes to its Mobile Home Initiative which provide a mechanism for park owners to replace existing substandard units. Many substandard units remain, however, both in and out of mobile home parks. Create a mobile home task force for EP<sup>2</sup> consisting of neighborhood residents, representatives from the CRA and County, and other stakeholders to review specific conditions and challenges faced by mobile home owners and renters and develop an approach to improve the quality and care for these units.

- **2.6** Support enforcement of the County's Property Maintenance Code. Work with local residents to identify and report violations to Code Enforcement so housing units and yards can be improved. In Eden Park, create an Eden Park Task Force to report issues on the community's behalf. Link programs that provide funding for home repair to the households that get cited for Code violations.
- **2.7** *Create a pool of funds for the demolition of unsafe units.* The County used to demolish unsafe units and place liens on the property for the cost of demolition. Today, unsafe structures are allowed to remain if the owner cannot afford demolition and the County does not take legal action. Identify funding sources for demolition and seek resident input to develop a demolition "wish list".



*EP*<sup>2</sup> needs programs to repair or replace substandard mobile home units.



## 3. IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE OF THE COMMUNITY.

### Beautification

**3.1** *Encourage local organizations and residents to help clean up EP*<sup>2</sup>. Work with the CRA and others to implement the "Going Green" Campaign that was started several years ago to educate residents about not littering. Work with local organizations and volunteers to educate residents and to support efforts by the CRA, MSTU, and other local groups to adopt road segments under the Adopt-A-Road Program.



Litter and illegal dumping are problems throughout EP<sup>2</sup>. The Sheriff's Office has been working with the local grocery story to reduce the number of shopping carts discarded throughout the area.

**3.2** Schedule regular community clean-up events. Work with Code Enforcement and the Sheriff's Office to hold EP<sup>2</sup> clean-up events which allow residents to legally dump unwanted large items. Encourage residents to participate to improve the appearance of their neighborhoods.



Collier County Code Enforcement and Sheriff's Office hold clean-ups throughout the year allowing residents to dump garbage for free. Increasing resident involvement will increase the impact and help engage residents in taking care of their community.



30

**3.3** Seek inexpensive ways for residents to beautify the community. Encourage residents to think about their community's appearance and ways to improve it. Some may include street art where permissible, fencing, and streets caping to improve the overall appearance.

### **Design Guidelines**

**3.4** Support efforts by the CRA to implement minimum design requirements for new commercial development in Immokalee. The proposed design requirements exist but have not been adopted due to concerns about possible increased construction costs resulting from their implementation. Work with the CRA and other groups to determine the additional costs the new requirements will produce. As feasible, educate the community and governing body about those costs and request adoption.







### **1. OFFER PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH TO ENGAGE** THEM IN POSITIVE ACTIVITIES.

1.1 Offer inexpensive fun activities for youth throughout the EP<sup>2</sup> area. Some of these may include movie nights or talent shows starting at the rental complexes and spreading to other locations. These events provide safe, fun activities for the children.

A free movie night for kids was hosted by the Sheriff's Office and Rural Neighborhoods for over 40 children. EP<sup>2</sup> children also turn out for family fun days at the rental complexes.



**Goal:** Youth and adults have opportunities to increase their knowledge and skills and to engage in positive activities.

1.2 Develop and offer new groups like 4-H or musical groups in the **EP**<sup>2</sup> area for youth. Find organizations and volunteers who can help lead these groups to engage youth.



- 1.3 Offer a summer arts program to introduce youth to music, dance, and arts. Pursue national partners like ASTEP or others that offer summer arts camps where children can learn about and experience the various arts programs.
- 1.4 Support requests for funding to continue and expand existing childcare and afterschool programs in EP<sup>2</sup>. RCMA and the Miracle Program currently provide childcare and after school programs. Yet more children could be served if more funding were available. Support the valuable work these groups do by supporting future funding requests that allow them to maintain and add new services.



### 2. IMPROVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULTS TO LEARN NEW SKILLS.

- **2.1** *Help residents learn English.* Some English classes are offered locally and are available at minimal cost, but residents may be unaware of them, lack transportation, or have other reasons for not attending. Work with residents and class providers to ensure classes meet the needs of residents.
- **2.2** *Offer computer classes for residents.* Today, many things must be done online such as applying for unemployment or applying for a job, yet residents have limited computer skills. Often, they pay someone else to do the applications for them. To resolve this, more computer classes are needed to help residents accomplish basic tasks online.
- **2.3** *Offer skills-building classes such as sewing and gardening.* Residents, especially women who do not work, have time to learn new skills such as sewing, gardening, or cooking. These skills can benefit their families by saving them money and encourage interaction among neighbors.

### 3. ENCOURAGE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS FOR RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES.

- **3.1** *Promote parenting classes.* Several groups offer free parenting classes in Immokalee. Work with these groups to promote the classes to residents.
- **3.2** *Create healthy relationship classes for teens.* The Shelter for Abused Women and Children offers classes for teenagers to help them develop and maintain healthy relationships as they mature and begin dating. This is important so teenagers avoid abusive relationships. Work with the Shelter to offer these classes in the EP<sup>2</sup> area.



## Healthy Lifestyles & Environment

### Why It's Important.

Health experts agree that the Social Determinants of Health are primary drivers of health inequities in the United States. Evidence shows that a person's ZIP code matters more than their genetic code in determining their longevity and health. Health disparities follow geographic patterns illustrating average life expectancies that differ by as much as 25 years, depending upon where people live. People living in areas of concentrated poverty, lower educational attainment and higher rates of unemployment will experience poorer health and shorter lives.

Physical activity, healthy eating and avoiding smoking and other harmful habits, however, has been shown to promote good health and longevity. The Blue Zones Initiative started in Naples in 2015 seeks to foster these activities and provide residents with healthy choices. It incorporates a variety of local programs and initiatives to improve the physical and emotional well-being of residents. Blue Zones is slowly expanding to other parts of the County and is scheduled to reach Immokalee in early 2017. Currently, little health data is available below the County level, but a 2014 Assessment Report for Blue Zones found that Immokalee scored among the lowest in the County in terms of health behaviors, emotional well-being and basic access to care.

Residents would like to change that though. The Healthy Lifestyles and Environment section includes strategies to help residents enjoy good nutrition, obtain medical and dental care and be physically active. Healthcare is a major concern in the community. The primary health facility is the Marion E. Fether Clinic offered by the Healthcare Network of Southwest Florida. Previously open only during the week, the clinic began offering Saturday hours during

**Goal:** EP<sup>2</sup> is a safe community that provides residents of all ages with the resources and tools to lead active, healthy lives.

harvest season (November through April). The lack of a weekend urgent care or health provider remains an issue which requires a 30-60 minute drive to the nearest facility for weekend accidents or illnesses. Local opportunities to have lab work and x-rays done would also be beneficial to the community. Currently the clinic provides these services for their doctors/patients only.

A healthy environment is also critical to supporting healthy choices and making it easy for residents to find safe places for physical exercise and play. Though criminal activity is not extensive in much of the EP<sup>2</sup> area, it is problematic for residents in the Eden Park neighborhood. The plan includes strategies to increase communication and involvement with the Sheriff's Office in hopes of addressing this.

Strategies are also included to promote healthy nutrition. The University of Florida's Family Nutrition Program offers free cooking classes for parents that focus on promoting good nutrition for their families. These and other related activities will be instrumental in helping families make better food choices.



## **1. ENSURE THE COMMUNITY IS A SAFE PLACE FOR RESIDENTS.**

**1.1** *Develop a resident-led Eden Park Task Force to address community issues including crime and code concerns.* The Eden Park Task Force will allow open communication with the Sheriff's Office and Collier County Code Enforcement regarding issues occurring in the neighborhood.



- **1.2** Work with the Sheriff's Office to build relationships between residents and officers. Create opportunities such as block parties, neighborhood clean-up events, resident leadership academies and other activities for officers to positively interact with residents and increase trust.
- **1.3** *Facilitate responsible pet ownership.* Immokalee has a high number of loose animals that can be a threat to pedestrians and are in danger themselves from cars and trucks. Increase animal control in the area as well as educate residents on the importance of keeping animals leashed or fenced.



#### HEALTHY LIFESTYLES EARLY ACHIEVEMENTS



#### We're Getting Healthy

- EP<sup>2</sup> held a Health Fair in April 2016 in the Eden Park neighborhood. Twenty agencies participated providing free flu shots and blood pressure, diabetes and dental screenings.
- Healthcare Network of Southwest Florida's mobile unit provides regular dental and health screenings at apartment complexes.
- University of Florida's Family Nutrition Program offered five, multi-week Cooking for Parents courses for residents in EP<sup>2</sup>. The classes increase parents' knowledge about reading nutrition labels and promoting healthy diets. A Healthy Eating class for children will start next year.

### 2. PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS TO LIVE ACTIVE, HEALTHY LIVES.

- **2.1** *Support the Blue Zones Initiative in Immokalee.* Blue Zones started in Naples in 2015 and will expand to Immokalee in 2017. Blue Zones is a community effort designed to provide opportunities for residents to improve their physical and mental health. Work with Blue Zones and other partners to expand healthy options in Immokalee.
- **2.2** *Secure additional after hours or weekend health services.* The Marion E. Fether Clinic recently began offering Saturday hours during season. This is a great opportunity for families who cannot make it to the clinic during the week or who get sick over the weekend. Support the Saturday hours and continue to see if additional weekend facilities can be made available.
- **2.3** Continue promoting healthy cooking and eating opportunities. The University of Florida's Family Nutrition Program offers healthy cooking classes for parents. These classes provide handson opportunities for residents to learn ways of improving their family's health. Continue working with UF and other partners to promote these and other opportunities to help improve nutrition for residents.



**2.4** *Help residents grow their own vegetables.* Both children and adults benefit from growing their own food and learning to cook with it. Programs like this or community gardens could be offered through the schools or at other locations in the community where adults and children can participate. Create a pilot program at Sanders Pines.


**2.5** *Encourage the creation of new neighborhood exercise programs for adults and children.* Some could include Zumba, Yoga, walking groups, or general exercise programs which could be offered at existing community buildings or facilities, thereby requiring only limited investment.



**2.6** *Host health screenings in the EP<sup>2</sup> neighborhood.* The Collier County Health Department hosts a large health fair each year at their site, but due to transportation issues, many residents from EP<sup>2</sup> may not attend. Work with the Collier County Health Department, the Healthcare Network of Southwest Florida, Extension Office and others to provide health screenings, and where possible health services, in the EP<sup>2</sup> neighborhoods.



2.7 Increase opportunities for senior citizens to remain active. Immokalee has limited programs specifically geared toward senior citizens to help them socialize and/or stay physically active. Work with the Extension Office, County, and other partners to implement programs at the Roberts Senior Center and other locations to help seniors remain engaged and healthy.



**2.8** *Encourage innovative efforts to promote healthy behaviors.* Linking resident health to the places families reside is a promising approach to promoting a healthier life-style. Promoting partnerships between Tobacco-Free Collier and area landlords to offer smoke-free housing options or encouraging neighborhood-based programs to reduce sexual assault and bullying are encouraged.



#### Resident Engagement

#### Why It's Important.

Resident leadership is fundamental to creating and building a strong neighborhood. When there is strong resident leadership, neighbors build relationships and work together to address problems. Through working together, residents build a strong sense of community among themselves and stronger attachment to the place they call home. Vibrant neighborhoods are places where residents invest their time, money and energy.

People must know and trust one another in order to work together. Fostering and supporting resident engagement through activities that build connections among residents, and providing structure and systems that enhance residents' abilities to make their visions for the neighborhood a reality will allow EP<sup>2</sup> to grow and thrive into the future.

Leadership is a critical component of resident engagement. Residents must feel confident to interact with other residents and stakeholders to facilitate community change. In Immokalee, some groups offer mentoring programs that target youth and young athletes. These programs are important because they encourage younger residents to develop and use leadership skills. Yet many more residents are not engaged and lack the leadership skills to promote meaningful change. Often their non-participation is due to lack of time resulting from family obligations, work, and other restraints. But without good neighbors who get involved, the Immokalee community falls behind other areas that better articulate their needs when it comes to infrastructure and program needs. **Goal:** Residents of EP<sup>2</sup> are engaged and working together to improve their community.

This final section of the plan includes strategies that are critical to helping Immokalee change. They are designed to promote resident involvement in the EP<sup>2</sup> community and in implementation of the projects they selected. Through this involvement, residents increase their leadership and interpersonal skills thereby generating greater input and direction in the future of EP<sup>2</sup>.



### 1. RESIDENTS ARE ENGAGED IN THE COMMUNITY.

**1.1** *Increase the number of community events held in the EP<sup>2</sup> neighborhoods.* Residents have repeatedly stated they would welcome more events that celebrate their culture and/or give them a chance to interact in a positive, fun manner. Work with residents to plan and hold such an event at least annually.



**1.2** Develop Eden Gardens and Sanders Pines tenant groups to help plan activities at the complexes. The

> groups will discuss concerns for the area and possible solutions. They will also provide input and assistance in planning activities and events.

**1.3** *Increase involvement of local Homeowner Associations (HOA) in EP<sup>2</sup> activities.* Each subdivision has a HOA that represents residents in that development. Increase efforts to partner with the HOAs and involve their members in community activities.

#### 2. RESIDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO RESOURCES TO HELP THEM PLAY AN ACTIVE PART IN THEIR COMMUNITY.

- **2.1** *Provide Resident Leadership Academies (RLAs) for residents.* RLAs can help residents learn skills to enable them to be more active in the community.
- **2.2** Support residents as they undertake implementation of 12 resident-driven strategies listed in earlier sections of our EP<sup>2</sup> plan.



# **Implementation Plan**

#### **Physical Environment**

Goal: EP<sup>2</sup> is an attractive, livable community that offers a variety of safe, affordable housing opportunities for its residents

affordable housing opportunities for its residents		-		
Strategy 1: Improve infrastructure and public space to make EP <sup>2</sup> a safe, livable community.	1.1) Add new streetlights to make EP <sup>2</sup> safer.	CRA, MSTU, RN, County	October 2017	Number of new lights added.
	1.2) Develop a resident-based volunteer group to identify and report streetlight outages.	CRA, MSTU, RN, residents	January 2017	Quarterly reviews of lighting.
	1.3) Improve drainage to prevent property damage and ensure resident safety.	County, CRA	February 2017	Track county improvements. Number of presentations to residents on maintaining water flow.
	1.4) Improve walkability in the community.	County, CRA, RN	June 2017	Feet of new or improved sidewalks or other walkability-related improvements.
	1.5) Evaluate techniques to make vehicular travel safer for drivers and pedestrians.	County, Sheriff's Office, RN	January 2018	Number of new lights, speed bumps or other measures installed. Input from Sheriff's office on speeding.
	1.6) Work with the County to improve the location and condition of bus stops in Immokalee.	CAT, RN	September 2016	Number of improved bus stops.
	1.7) Identify potential sites for new parks.	County, Parks & Rec, CRA	January 2016	Track county progress on this initiative.

**Primary Partners** 

**Start Date** 

Indicators

Strategy 2: Expand and improve the supply of safe, affordable housing.	2.1) Encourage the supply of safe, affordable rental, homeownership, and special needs units to meet Immokalee's housing needs.	RN, Habitat, County CHS, Arrowhead	January 2016	Number of new units constructed by type.
	2.2) Provide financial literacy training for renters and future homeowners.	HELP, RN, Habitat	March 2016	Number of classes, number of people counseled.
	2.3) Help homeowners repair their homes.	CASL, RN, Habitat, County CHS, Centro Campesino	September 2016	Number of units rehabbed.
	2.4) Seek funding, partners, and volunteers to develop a rehab program for homeowners who do not qualify for the existing programs.	RN, Habitat, Local Churches, Residents	January 2017	Number of units rehabbed.
	2.5) Work with local partners to develop strategies for improving the condition of mobile homes.	CRA, County, mobile home park owners, RN	January 2018	Task force created. Strategies developed. Number of units improved.
	2.6) Support enforcement of the County's Property Maintenance Code.	Code Enforcement, RN, Eden Park Task Force, Residents	April 2016	Number of cases filed and addressed.
	2.7) Create a pool of funds for the demolition of unsafe units.	County, RN, Code Enforcement	January 2018	Strategies and wish list created. Funding identified.
Strategy 3: Improve the appearance of the community.	3.1) Encourage local organizations and residents to help clean up EP <sup>2</sup> .	Residents, RN, CRA	October 2016	Number of groups in Adopt- a-Road or other programs. Number of presentations to residents on cleaning up community.
	3.2) Schedule regular community clean-up events.	Residents, Code Enforcement, Sheriff's Office, RN	March 2016	Number of clean-ups held. Tons of garbage collected.
	3.3) Seek inexpensive ways for residents to beautify the community.	CRA, RN, Residents	October 2016	Number of activities undertaken.
	3.4) Support efforts by the CRA to implement minimum design requirements for new commercial development in Immokalee.	CRA, RN	May 2017	Adoption of design standards.

Education &	Youth			
Goal: Youth and adults l and skills and to engage	nave opportunities to increase their knowledge in positive activities.	Primary Partners	Start Date	Indicators
Strategy 1. Offer programs for youth to engage them in positive activities.	1.1) Offer inexpensive fun activities for youth throughout the EP <sup>2</sup> area.	RN, Parks & Rec, Sheriff's Department	April 2016	Number of events held.
	1.2) Develop and offer new groups like 4-H or musical groups in the EP <sup>2</sup> area for youth.	UF, Volunteers, RN	September 2017	Number of classes.
	1.3) Offer a summer arts program to introduce youth to music, dance, and arts.	En Familia, United Arts Council of Collier County, RN	July 2017	Number of events held.
	1.4) Support requests for funding to continue and expand existing childcare and afterschool programs in EP <sup>2</sup> .	RCMA, Guadalupe Center, The Immo- kalee Foundation, Workforce Devel- opment Board	August 2016	Number of existing and new slots for childcare and afterschool students.
Strategy 2. Improve opportunities for adults to learn new skills.	2.1) Help residents learn English.	Elementary schools, iTech, RN	November 2016	Number of classes.
	2.2) Offer computer classes for residents.	HELP, Public Library, RN	January 2017	Number of classes.
	2.3) Offer skills-building classes such as sewing and gardening.	RN	November 2015	Number of classes.
Strategy 3. Encourage healthy relationships for residents of all ages.	3.1) Promote parenting classes.	Lee Memorial, RN, Eden Park Elementary	February 2016	Number of classes held
	3.2) Create healthy relationship classes for teens.	Shelter for Abused Women & Children, RN	October 2016	Number of classes held

Healthy Life	styles & Environment			
Goal: EP <sup>2</sup> is a safe comm resources and tools to le	unity that provides residents of all ages with the ad active, healthy lives.	Primary Partners	Start Date	Indicators
Strategy 1. Ensure the community is a safe place for residents.	1.1) Develop a resident-led Eden Park Task Force to address community issues including crime and code concerns.	Sheriff's office, RN, Eden Park Task Force, Code Enforcement	September 2016	Creation of group. Number of meetings/activities.
	1.2) Work with the Sheriff's Office to build relationships between residents and officers.	Sheriff's Office, RN, Eden Park Task Force, Residents	March 2016	Number of events held.
	1.3) Facilitate responsible pet ownership.	Code Enforcement, Domestic Animal Control	July 2017	Number of outreach calls or presentations made.
	2.1) Support the Blue Zones Initiative in Immokalee.	RN, Blue Zones, Health Department	March 2017	Participation in Blue Zones Initiatives.
Strategy 2. Provide opportunities for	2.2) Secure additional after hours or weekend health services.	Healthcare Network of Southwest Florida, Health Department	January 2016	Amount of hours offered on weekends.
	2.3) Continue promoting healthy cooking and eating opportunities.	UF, RN, Healthcare Network, Health Department	January 2016	Number of classes or events held.
	2.4) Help residents grow their own vegetables.	UF, Healthcare Network, Health Department, RN	August 2017	Number of community gardens, number of participants.
residents to live	2.5) Encourage the creation of new neighborhood exercise programs for adults and children.	UF, RN	January 2017	Number of classes or events held.
active, healthy lives.	2.6) Host health screenings in the EP <sup>2</sup> neighborhood.	UF, Parks & Recreation, RN, All Children's Hospital	April 2016	Number of screenings held.
	2.7) Increase opportunities for senior citizens to remain active.	Health Department, Healthcare Network, UF, RN	April 2016	Number of new events added.
	2.8) Encourage innovative efforts to promote healthy behaviors.	Shelter for Abused Women & Children, UF, Healthcare Network	January 2017	Number of new smoke-free programs at rental complexes. Number of new health initiativies implemented.

Resident Engagement				
Goal: Residents of EP <sup>2</sup> are engaged and working together to improve the community.		Primary Partners	Start Date	Indicators
	1.1) Increase the number of community events held in the EP <sup>2</sup> neighborhoods.	RN	January 2017	Number of events held.
Strategy 1. Residents are engaged in the community.	1.2) Develop Eden Gardens and Sanders Pines Resident Groups to help plan activities at the complexes.	RN	September 2016	Creation of group. Number of meetings/activities.
community.	1.3) Incease involvement of local Homeowner Associations in EP <sup>2</sup> activities.	RN, Habitat, Arrowhead, Jubilation	January 2017	Outreach to HOAs. Number of joint events.
Strategy 2. Residents have access to resources to help them play an active part in their community.	2.1) Provide Resident Leadersip Academies (RLAs) for residents.	RN, En Familia	March 2016	Number of classes held.
	2.2) Support residents as they undertake implemetation of 12 resident-driven strategies listed in earlier sections of our EP <sup>2</sup> plan.	Residents, RN	April 2016	See indicators under individual strategies.

# **APPENDIX**

Target Area	. 46
Land Use	47
Assets	. 48
Residential Uses	49
Housing Tenure	50
Mobile Home Parks & Migrant Camps	51
Housing Conditions	52
Existing Sidewalks	53
Prioritized Needs for Sidewalks	. 54
Existing Bus Routes	55
Streetlights	56





#### Land Use



**Assets** 



### **Residential Uses**



## **Housing Tenure**



# **Mobile Homes Parks & Migrant Camps**



## **Housing Conditions**





### **Prioritized Needs for Sidewalks**



## **Existing Bus Routes**



### **Streetlights**



#### EDEN PARK-ESPERANZA PLACE 57

#### RURAL NEIGHBORHOODS EDEN PARK - ESPERANZA PLACE