



# REGIONAL BUSINESS ALLIANCE of Southwest Florida, Inc.



Naples, the Ultimate in Business and Leisure



## ABOUT US

**The Regional Business Alliance of Southwest Florida, Inc. is a private sector 501(c) (6) organization of current and inactive Chief Executive Officers and senior business executives dedicated to leveraging their talent, resources and networks to support and enhance the attraction and recruitment of small and mid-sized businesses to Southwest Florida**

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Courtesy of The Council for International Visitors in Collier (CIVIC)

### **About The Council for International Visitors in Collier (CIVIC)**

**The Council of International Visitors in Collier (CIVIC) is a non-profit, 501 (c) 3 volunteer organization with members from Collier County and the neighboring areas of Southwest Florida under the guidance of The Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce. We are one of 95 similar councils throughout the country affiliated with the National Council for International Visitors (NCIV). CIVIC is envisioned as a vital focal point for international visitors having an interest in Greater Naples and Collier County under the auspices of the US State Department to promote interaction between Naples and countries around the world on subjects of mutual interest. For more information, contact [Jan@napleschamber.org](mailto:Jan@napleschamber.org) or (239) 403-2907.**

## GENERIC PROPOSAL

Introduction.....	2
Naples/Collier County, Florida.....	4
Lifestyle	
Population	
Age	
Households	
Income	
Education Levels	
The Economic and Workforce Structure.....	10
Tax Rates	
Employment	
Major Businesses	
Wages by Industry	
Business Parks	
Land	
General Aviation.....	14
Health Care.....	16
Education.....	17
County Gains Economic Recognition.....	19
Business Incentive Programs.....	20

## **PROPOSAL INTRODUCTION**

This proposal is expected to be used, largely in full, to respond to a company interested in pursuing Southwest Florida as a home for one or all of its entities.

### **I. LIKELY INDUSTRIES**

#### **Health care technology/life sciences**

When one looks at the projected population growth in Florida over the next twenty years, due in large part to the baby boom generation producing 1,000 retirees per day, it is obvious that Florida will be at the center of health care delivery in the U.S. The challenges the state will face in effectively delivering health care, on that scale, demand advanced technological solutions.

In medical research, Florida has set a course with the Scripps Research Institute being established in the state. The University of Florida is also recognized as one of the most advanced medical research institutions in the country. The H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute, associated with the University of South Florida in Tampa, is a highly-regarded cancer research institution. Additionally, The Burnham Institute for Medical Research is locating a new research facility in Orlando; The Torrey Pines Institute for Molecular Studies is establishing a biotechnology center in Port St. Lucie; SRI International is developing a marine technology research complex, along with the University of South Florida, in St. Petersburg; and Merck & Co. recently announced a cancer research collaboration with the Moffitt Cancer Center, named M2Gen.

Florida is fast becoming one of the life sciences meccas in the country.

#### **Information technology**

The effectiveness of almost any business today is highly dependent upon the use of information technology; it is the backbone of the business. Entrepreneurial opportunities abound in this regard. Florida's growing labor pool and strong post-secondary educational capabilities position it well to participate in this industry. The quality of life and lifestyle, particularly in Southwest Florida, help to attract the best and brightest young talent.

#### **Corporate and regional headquarters**

Southwest Florida is an ideal location for corporate and regional headquarters. Due to available technology and the worldwide distribution of the workforce, headquarters very often do not need to be co-located with the business' operational facilities. The quality of life in Southwest Florida is very attractive to senior executives. For those companies desiring to expand penetration into Central and South American markets, the region is an excellent fit too. Further, headquarters can benefit from the support and counsel provided to them from other corporate executives (retired and active) that already reside in the area; it is estimated that 1000 CEOs or senior executives have homes in Collier County alone.

## **II. EXCEPTIONAL BENEFITS**

### **Business-friendly environment**

Florida's state and local governments have made many of the most vital business functions easily accessible online. A pro-business, pro-technology agenda is assured, thanks to continuing communication between legislators and key business sector associations, including Florida Aviation Aerospace Alliance, BioFlorida, Florida Defense Alliance, ITFlorida, Florida Space Authority and many others. Florida's tax structure is one of the five most attractive in the country:

- No state personal income tax

- No state-level property tax

- No inventory tax

- No annual corporate franchise tax levied on stock

- A corporate income tax rate of 5.5 percent

The state has established a precedent in recent years in providing significant financial incentives to the life science industry. Collier County also provides an array of financial incentives which are summarized in this document.

### **Land availability**

Significant acreage can be made available in eastern Collier County, potentially in the vicinity of the new town of Ave Maria in Collier County.

### **Attractiveness as a destination**

Naples is a location where customers, prospects and employees want to come. It is a place which attracts visitors and residents due to its beauty, its climate, and its upscale ambience.

## **Naples/Collier County, Florida**

### **Lifestyle**

Southwest Florida is graced with exceptional recreational, cultural and community resources in addition to balmy weather and a beautiful environment.

The sub-tropical climate, with temperatures averaging 75 degrees, and upscale amenities make Naples an unusual blend of the casual and sophisticated. The pristine beaches, named the country's best by the Travel Channel, provide numerous opportunities including sunsets worthy of applause. Sports fishing and pleasure cruising are both facilitated by the ideal, uncrowded waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

Naples boasts the second most golf holes per capita in the country, with the PGA and Champion Tours making regular stops. Tennis courts are numerous as well. Elegant dining and shopping options abound.

World-class cultural venues include the Naples Philharmonic Center for the Arts (the Phil) which boasts two audience concert halls and a 30,000 square foot art museum. Other Naples offerings include the vonLiebig Art Center, the Sugden Theater, numerous art galleries and frequent outdoor art festivals. Natural beauty is an every day occurrence in Naples: botanical gardens, animal sanctuaries, a child-friendly zoo and the world-renowned Everglades nearby.

Naples is a community distinguished by its philanthropy. Among many other venues, the community hosts the most successful wine festival in the country, having raised over \$18 million in 2007 for children's charities. The \$100 million+ Naples Philharmonic Center and Museum of Art was totally funded through donations. Half of its operating costs continue to be underwritten by endowments.

### **Population**

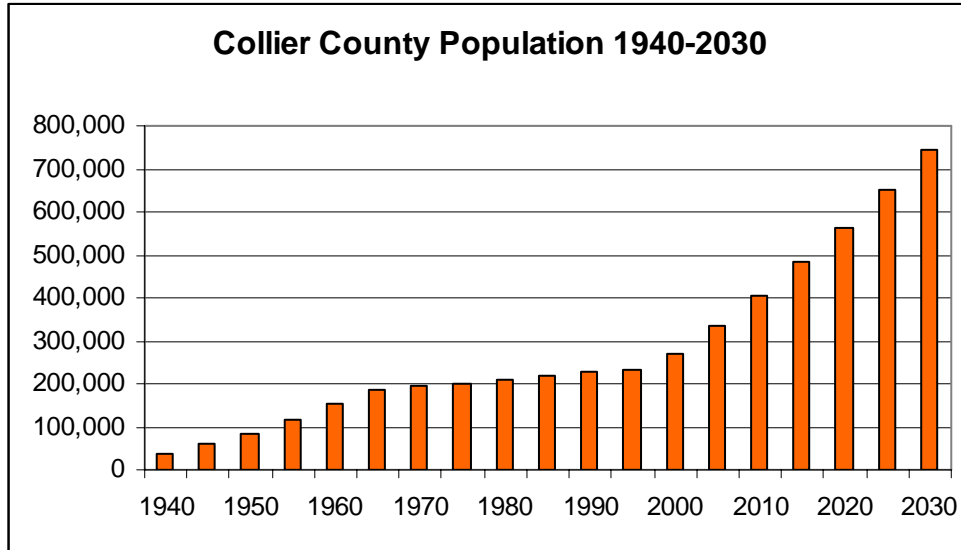
Naples/Collier County, Florida remains one of the fastest growing areas in the United States. The area has maintained an illustrious record of being ranked in the top five growth areas over the past decade. Geographically, the County encompasses 2,033 square miles making it the largest land mass county east of the Mississippi River. Initial growth has taken place along the County's coastline. There is ample opportunity for growth to move east, where current planning will blend a sustainable workforce with ample business opportunities to create new towns, hamlets and villages that are viable and self-sustaining.

The population growth in Collier County has primarily been through annual net migration to the County from other areas of the country. From 1990 to 2000, of the 99,278 new residents of Collier County who were recorded in the 2000 Census, more than 92.8% or 92,123 persons migrated to Collier from some other area of the country. Leading states with

population moving to Collier County in recent years have been the states of New York, Ohio, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Illinois and Pennsylvania.

Collier County has long been an attractive place to retire, and therefore, the County is slightly older than the country on average. The County is however slightly younger than its neighboring county to the north with a median age of 44.1 years, compared with Lee County's median age of 45.2 years. In fact, 75% of Collier County's total population is younger than 65 years of age.

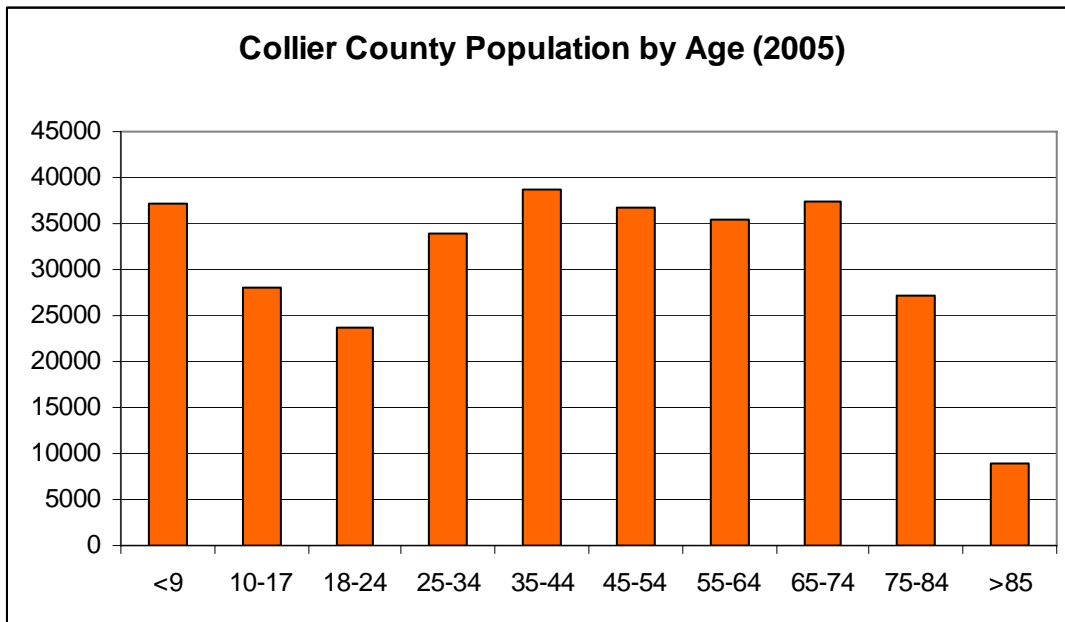
Collier County continues to be an area that experiences a great deal of seasonal population increases. During the months between November and April, Collier County's population increases by an estimated one-third due to seasonal residents and short-term agricultural workers in the Immokalee area.



Source: Collier County Development Services Long Range Planning

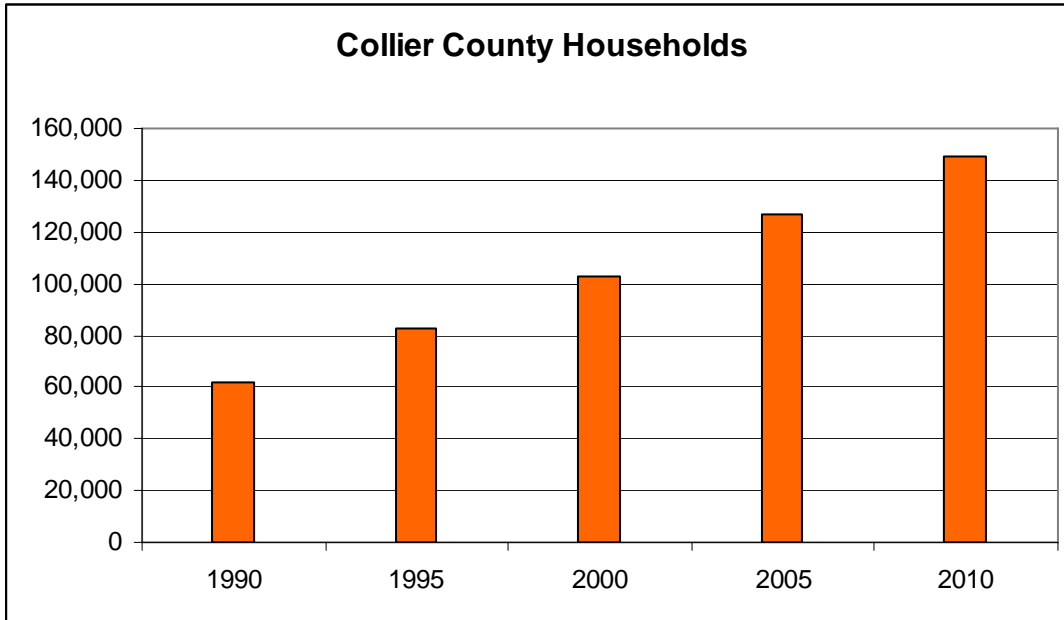
Close to 320,000 people call Collier County home. The population is expected to nearly double by the year 2030.

The majority of Collier County’s population falls between the ages of 25 and 74 with a median age of 44.1 years. The County’s population by age reflects the baby boomer movement between the ages of 35 and 64, which makes up over one-third of the population.



Source: I Site Data Site Selection Software, version 2004.01.18, produced by GeoVue, Inc.

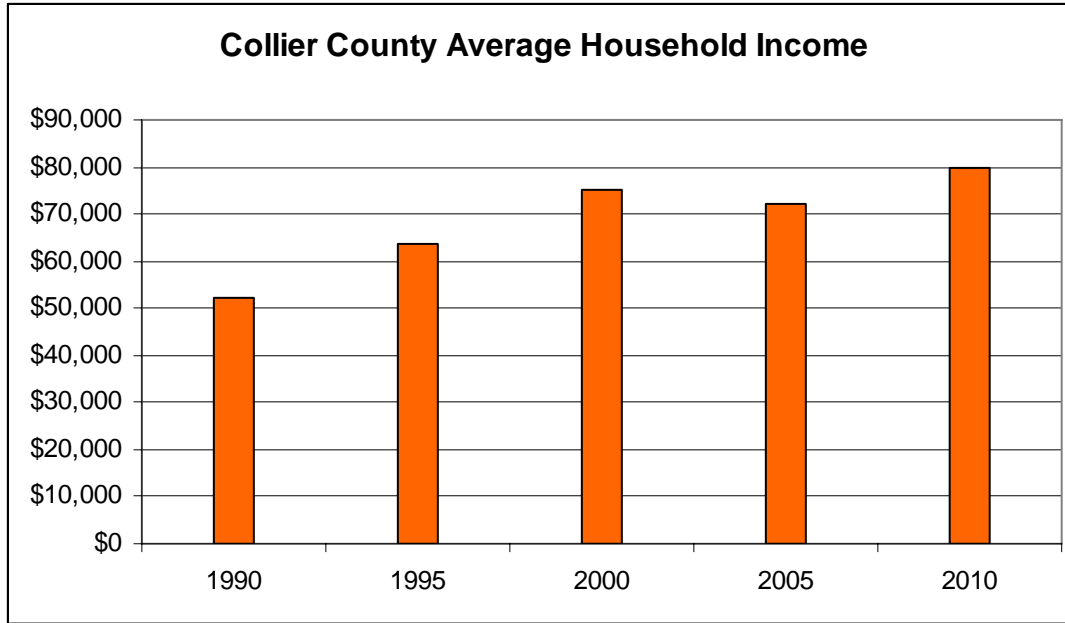
In looking at the Collier County population in more detail, we find that the County's household growth has more than doubled in the past 20 years. There are almost 130,000 homes in the County in 2005. It is forecasted that another 20,000 households will be formed in the next five years.



Source: I

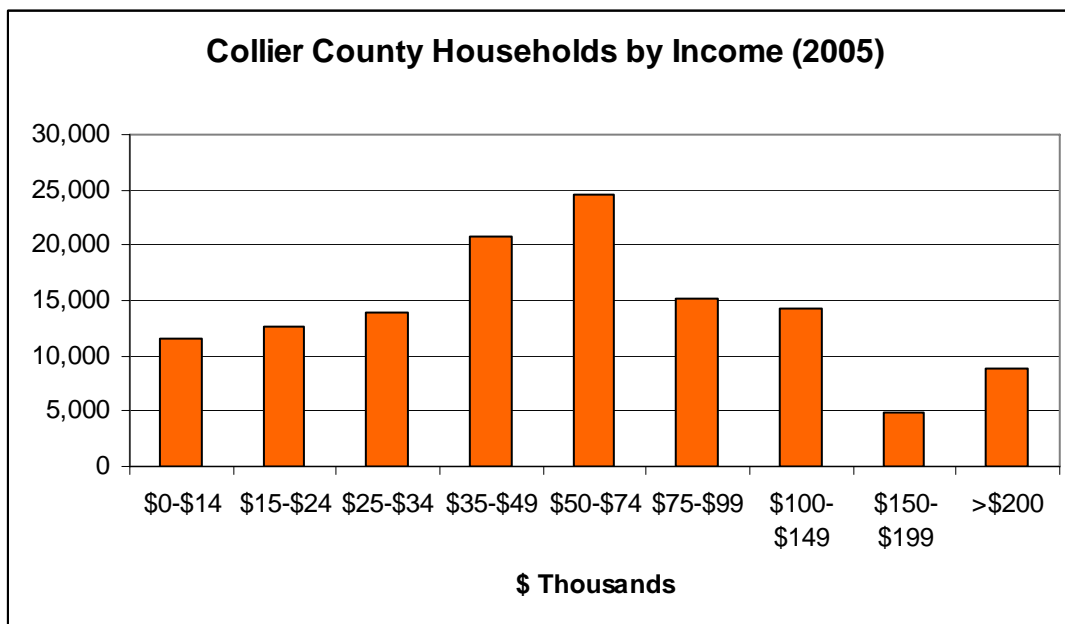
Site Data Site Selection Software, version 2004.01.18, produced by GeoVue, Inc.

The average household income of the 130,000 households in Collier County in 2005 is \$72,000. The average household income is forecasted to increase to \$80,000 by the year 2010.



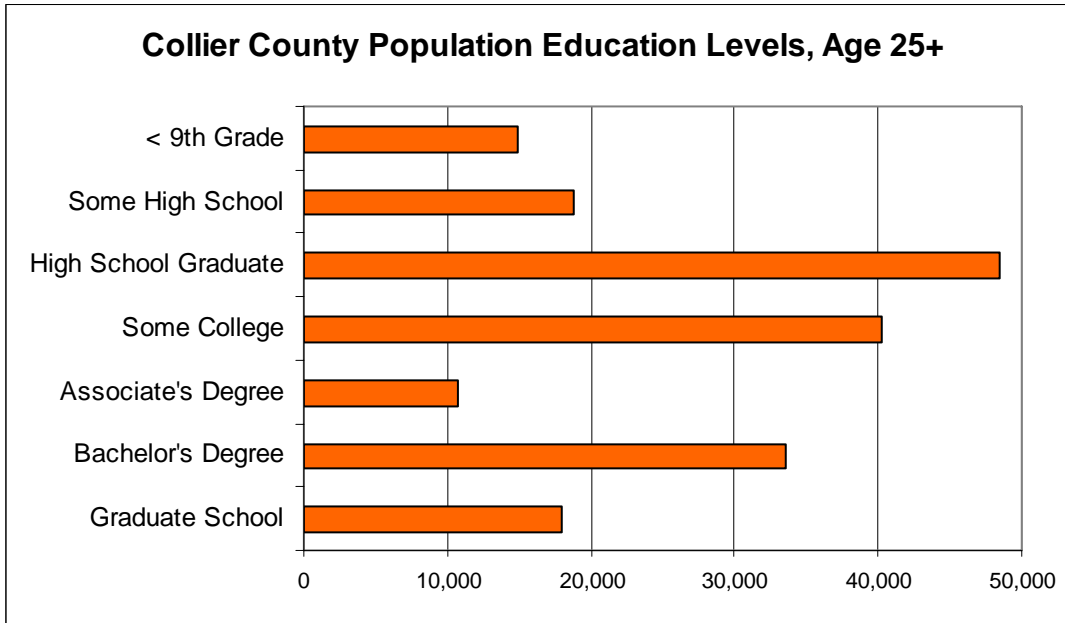
Source: I Site Data Site Selection Software, version 2004.01.18, produced by GeoVue, Inc.

The median household income for the year 2005 is \$64,100. Over half of the households in Collier County make between \$35,000 and \$99,000 annually.

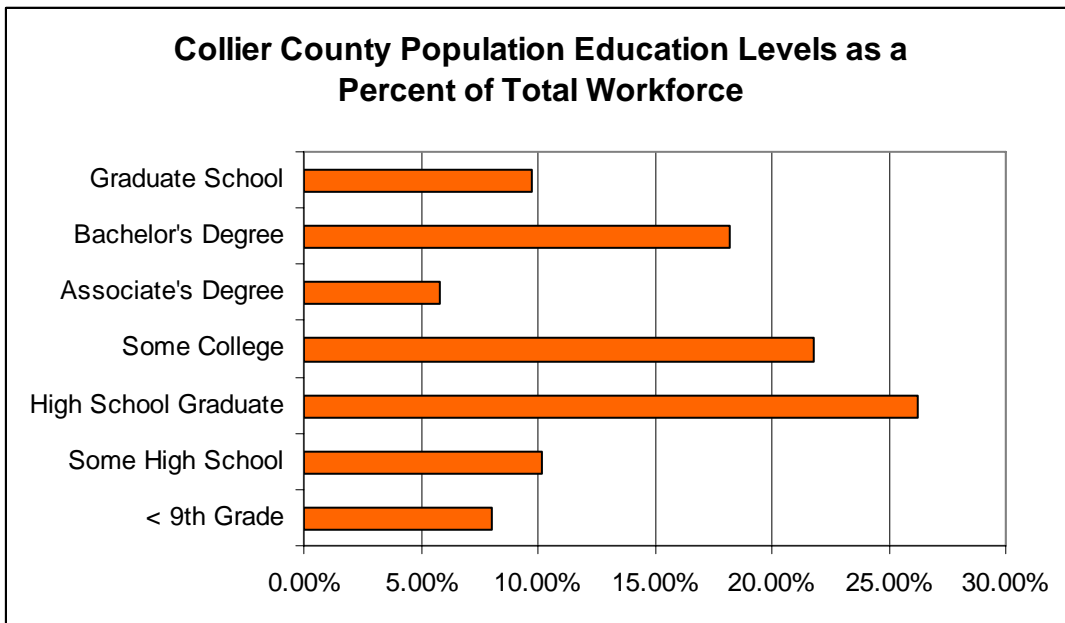


Source: I Site Data Site Selection Software, version 2004.01.18, produced by GeoVue, Inc.

The education level of the Collier County population in the age 25+ category is very favorable to potential employers. In the County, 81.76% of the 25+ population has a minimum high school education. This educational structure will serve the County well going forward as it will support the future high tech and high wage industries forecasted for future growth.



Source: I Site Data Site Selection Software, version 2004.01.18, produced by GeoVue, Inc.



Source: I Site Data Site Selection Software, version 2004.01.18, produced by GeoVue, Inc.

## **The Economic and Workforce Structure**

Collier County offers twenty-first century executives an excellent, connected environment to grow their businesses, as well as an unsurpassed quality of life. Pristine beaches, world-class golf and recreation amenities, and a variety of entertainment and cultural events provide Collier County residents with limitless activity options.

This unique functional paradise offers comprehensive civic resources – from renowned medical facilities to dynamic cultural venues, from esteemed educational institutions to convenient transportation options.

The economic landscape of Collier County is quite different from much of the country. Due to the prosperous tourism market and the number of part-time residents, the local economy experiences a strong positive seasonal factor during winter months. Employment and sales figures increase sharply with increases in tourists and part-time residents.

The seasonality has, however, become less prominent in recent years as more part-time residents are making Collier County their full-time home. That, coupled with the transformation of agricultural land into residential and commercial development, has spurred significant business growth in the area.

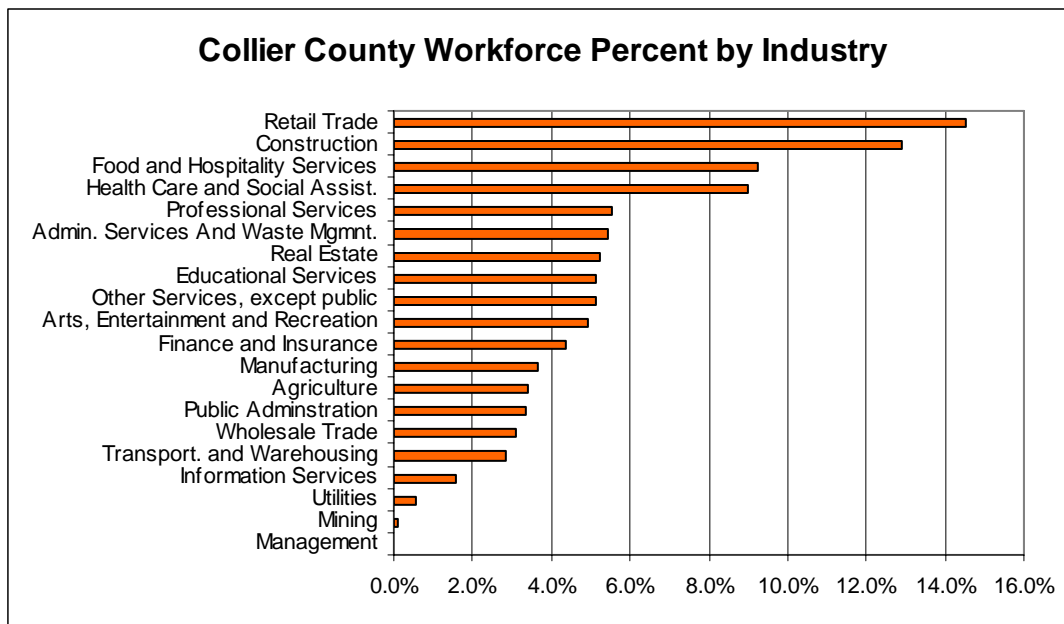
Collier County continues to have one of the strongest economies in the State of Florida, with one of the lowest unemployment rates, highest rates of job creation, and average wages in the top quartile of all Florida counties.

Florida, and especially Collier County, is a great place to operate a business for a variety of reasons:

- The state corporate income tax rate of 5.5% is very low compared with other states.
- The state also has no personal income tax, which helps businesses attract employees to the area.
- The ad valorem millage rates for the most recent year (2004) total 13.27, which is comparable to most other areas of the country.
- The County has adopted a Fast-Track Regulatory Program to assure the rapid completion of construction projects.

## Employment

There are 16,778 business establishments in Collier County. The County's economy continues to be heavily weighted in the production of goods and services for new population and temporary visitors. The retail trade, construction, and hotel industries have the most employees in Collier County. Those three industries combined employ more than 43,000 people in Collier County. The fourth largest employment sector is the healthcare industry, which employs over 11,000 people and will undoubtedly increase in total number and as a percent of all employment as the Collier County population grows and matures.



Source: I Site Data Site Selection Software, version 2004.01.18, produced by GeoVue, Inc.

In Collier County, 34.36% of population is in the workforce, which equates to a workforce of approximately 105,500 employees. The workforce is forecasted to grow by just over 5,000 employees per year through the year 2030. The unemployment rate as of December, 2006 is 2.4% , which is favorable to Florida's 3.3% rate. The population increase in the "seasonal months" creates a high degree of seasonality within certain sectors of Collier County's economy, most notably in the retail, service, and hospitality sectors.

Major Businesses

As is the case in much of the country, Collier County is comprised of primarily small businesses. In fact, of Collier County's more than 9,800 businesses which reported employees in 2002, over 90% reported employing 20 or fewer employees at each location. (Agency for Workforce Innovation, 2003.)

A list of the largest private sector employers in Collier and Lee Counties follow:

Lee Memorial Health System  
Business Line: Healthcare  
Number of Employees..... 9000 (2007)

Publix Supermarkets  
Business Line: Grocery Stores  
Number of Employees..... 5,078

NCH Healthcare System  
Business Line: Healthcare  
Number of Employees.....4,000 (2007)

Hospital Management Associates (HMA)  
Business Line: Healthcare  
Number of Employees..... 2,400 (2007)

Wal-Mart  
Business Line: General Merchandise Retail  
Number of Employees.....1,547 (2006)

Ritz Carlton Hotel  
Business Line: Hotels & Motels  
Number of Employees..... 1,500 (2006)

ASG Software Solutions  
Business Line: Information Technology.....1,000 (2006)

Interstate Hotels & Resorts  
Business Line: Call Centers  
Number of Employees..... 893

Sprint Telecommunications  
Business Line: Telephone communications  
Number of Employees.....850  
Source: Dunn & Bradstreet, Marketplace 2003

### Wages by Industry

In 2002, employees in the Finance and Insurance sectors of the Collier County economy were able to command the highest wages. Employees in Professional and Technical service industries, which includes engineering, legal, and accounting services, comprised the second highest-paid industry. The lowest paid employees were in the agricultural industry. Notably, while the agricultural sector is the lowest paid sector, it comprises nearly 7,000 working persons, a sizable piece of the total Collier County employment.

### Business Parks

There are 24 industrial parks and parks of commerce located throughout Collier County. Each park is within close proximity to Interstate 75, for connection to major air transportation and water ports. Collier County's zoning allows the flexibility of properties of 19-acres or more to be zoned as Research and Technology Parks, which are based on commerce parks with advanced infrastructure to attract technology based businesses.

### Land

Land costs in rural Collier County (east of Collier Boulevard, S.R. 951) are sufficiently reasonable as to make the area an excellent location for growing businesses looking to relocate or expand. The Immokalee Regional Airport and international cargo facility offers an excellent location for a storage and manufacturing operation. An operation in this area has excellent access to transportation routes to the east coast and the Collier County west coast market. The Collier County Airport Authority currently offers businesses who locate in the Immokalee Regional Airport and Industrial Park land leases of 10 cents per square foot.

Building near the town of Ave Maria is an attractive option in eastern Collier County. The town, being built in conjunction with the University, has been designed to be a compact, walk-able self-sustaining town offering a full range of residential options and commercial services to its residents. It has been designed to human scale. Street networks, distinctive character and environmental sustainability are integral to its planning.

The Ave Maria community totals about 5,000 acres of which 20% is dedicated to the University campus. When completed, the town will contain some 11,000 residential dwellings in a wide variety of price ranges and neighborhoods. Community resources operational when the community opens include: an on-site fire/sheriff building and medical facilities in partnership with NCH Healthcare System. Parks and recreational areas are included as well. The Collier County Public Schools have been gifted land for both elementary and middle schools. The town will be operational in the latter part of 2007.

Land in the coastal portions of Collier County has seen some of the largest increases in price in the nation in recent years. The recent appreciation has forced companies with large land needs to more eastern portions of Collier County.

### General Aviation

In addition to the international airport in Southwest Florida, there are four other airports in Collier County itself, the two larger of which are the Naples Municipal Airport and the Immokalee Airport.

#### Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW)

Southwest Florida International Airport was certified for operation in May 1983 and consistently has outpaced all projections for its growth. The airport served nearly 8 million passengers during 2006. It ranks among the 60 busiest airports in the nation and well above the national average for both historic and projected growth. It has ample room to grow further, making it unique amongst southern Florida airports.

Twenty-four airlines provide nonstop service between Southwest Florida International Airport and 31 U.S. airports, as well as Germany (Düsseldorf and Frankfurt) and Canada (Toronto), with convenient connecting service to destinations worldwide.

More than 700,000 passengers traveled through Southwest Florida International Airport in January, 2005 making it the busiest January in the airport's 22-year history. Passenger traffic increased 7.45 percent for the month compared to national activity with an increase of only 0.4 percent reported by the Air Transport Association. Air freight was up almost 9 percent compared to January 2005 and also set a new record for the month with more than 3 million pounds moving through the airport.

The original terminal reached its capacity seven years earlier than predicted and on Sept. 9, 2005, airport operations moved to a new \$438 million terminal complex, south of the airport's runway. The new terminal has the capacity for 10 million passengers annually. The newest airport terminal in the United States - and one of the first built from the ground up since Sept. 11 - is among the nation's first to be designed and built to accommodate current security equipment and procedures.

The 798,000-square-foot terminal has 28 aircraft gates along three concourses. Its incremental-expansion design provides long-term flexibility, cost efficiencies and the potential for a total of 65 gates. There is space for two more concourses. Two floors can be added to the three-story parking garage. There is parking on the airport grounds for 12,700 cars including short term, long term and employee parking.

#### Naples Municipal Airport

The Naples Municipal Airport is a fully certificated air carrier airport. The airport also provides services for general aviation including fueling and catering. It is home to charter airlines, aircraft maintenance facilities, a restaurant, fire/rescue services, mosquito control, car rental agencies, the Collier County Sheriff's Aviation Unit, flight schools, the Humane Society, and over 40 additional aviation and non-aviation businesses.

The airport encompasses approximately 732 acres of land, approximately two miles northeast of Old Naples with convenient access to major roads and Interstate 75.

### Immokalee Regional Airport

The Immokalee Regional Airport is free from congested airspace and is centrally located making it a short drive to numerous attractions in Collier County. The airport has two runways 5,000 ft. by 150 ft. asphalt with lights. The airport includes an Industrial Park, Manufacturing Incubator, and is within a Foreign Trade Zone, a Foreign Entrepreneurial Investment Zone, a HUB Zone, an Empowerment Zone, and an Enterprise Zone.

## **Health Care**

The residents of Collier and Lee Counties have an abundance of health-care options available.

### **Collier County**

The largest hospital operator in Collier County is the [\*\*NCH Healthcare System\*\*](#) (NCH). NCH operates two hospitals in the area. The "downtown" campus has 390 beds and more than 500 physicians. A 24-hour emergency department offers a full range of traditional emergency services as well as quality quick care for minor illness and injury.

The second NCH hospital in the area is the [\*\*North Collier Hospital\*\*](#) located off Immokalee Road, near the intersection of Goodlette-Frank Road. With the opening of a new patient tower in early 2007, the facility has a total of 215 beds, operates a 24-hour emergency center, and is home to NCH's pediatrics unit. The North Collier Hospital campus is also home to The Birth Place. Labor, delivery, recovery, and post partum care, as well as all services for the newborn, are provided in this state-of-the-art facility.

**Physicians Regional Medical Center, Pine Ridge** opened in 2001 and is located just off Interstate 75 on Pine Ridge Road. It operates as a full-service hospital and clinic. The hospital offers 70 private rooms. As a full-service, acute-care hospital, this facility includes a fully operational 24-hour emergency department, an intensive care unit, full service laboratory and radiology departments, and cardiac telemetry in all patient rooms. Health Management Associates (HMA) owns this hospital.

**Physicians Regional Medical Center, Collier Boulevard** opened in early, 2007. This state-of-the-art medical facility includes 100 private rooms, a separate dedicated women's center, and a professional medical office building. This is the first hospital located in Eastern Collier County. It too is owned by HMA.

[\*\*Health Management Associates\*\*](#) (HMA) is headquartered in Naples, FL and is the premier operator of acute care hospitals primarily in the southeast and southwest areas of non-urban America. Health Management Associates operates 18 hospitals in the state of Florida and over 60 hospitals nationwide. Fortune magazine's 2006 peer review survey ranked HMA as the most admired company in its industry.

### **Lee County**

**Lee Memorial Health System** operates five acute care hospitals and two specialty hospitals. It also has a primary care physician group, walk-in medical centers, a nursing home and home health care services. Its hospitals and medical centers provide nearly 1600 acute care beds. It employees number 8000. A wide, encompassing range of specialties are provided.

**Lehigh Regional Medical Center** This 88 bed facility has 120 practicing doctors and is owned by HMA.

## **Education**

### **Pre-K through high school**

Collier County Public Schools (CCPS) serve 43,000 students in 44 school locations. The school system has proactively worked with business to be responsive to its needs. College-bound students are prepared for university demands, while non-college bound graduates are prepared to achieve a level of technical skill to succeed in any field from mechanics to culinary arts. It is striving to become an "A" school district as graded by the Florida Governor's A+ Plan on or before 2009. Results from Florida state-level testing and average SAT scores are above the state's average.

Strong private schools are also available, two acclaimed college preparatory schools and a number of faith-based schools operate in the Naples area.

### **Secondary education**

Southwest Florida is served by five colleges and universities. Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) is Florida's 10<sup>th</sup> university in its system and is the flag ship institute of higher education in the region. The area is also served by Ave Maria University, Edison Community College, which is now offering 4-year degree programs, Barry University, Nova University and International College.

The tenth university in the State University System of Florida, **Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU)** was established in 1991 and first opened its doors in 1997. FGCU is located on 760 acres south of the Southwest Florida International Airport and within 20 minutes of Collier County. Environmental preservation takes up 400 of those acres on the main campus. FGCU has expanded in recent years, with enrollment rising from approximately 2,000 students in its first year to over 7,000 today. Through an aggressive satellite campus program, undergraduate enrollment is expected to more than double to 15,000 students over the next 5 years. FGCU is comprised of 5 colleges; Arts and Sciences, Business, Education, Health Sciences and Professional Studies. Those five colleges offer 62 majors including computer information systems and computer science along with 6 minors. FGCU recently opened a new Engineering School and will soon be offering a Music School and executive programs.

FGCU provides student exchange programs with two universities in China: Nankai University (in Tianjin) and Yantai University (in Yantai).

**Ave Maria University**, located in the town of Ave Maria in northeastern Collier County is the country's first new "true" Roman Catholic university to be built in four decades. Thomas Monaghan, founder of Domino's Pizza and former owner of the Detroit Tigers baseball team, is the impetus behind the university which has its roots in Ypsilanti, Michigan. The \$240 million first phase of the campus plans to be centered around the "Oratory of Ave Maria," a

60,000 square-foot church with aluminum and glass arches, and will include the nation's largest crucifix in stained glass.

Ave Maria University is targeting an initial enrollment of 650 students at the permanent campus and has plans to grow to approximately 5,000 undergraduate and graduate students. The school will have a full curriculum of traditional liberal arts, sciences and engineering programs and a comprehensive graduate program offering masters and doctoral degrees. Plans to move the Ave Maria Law School in Ann Arbor, MI to the Collier County town were recently announced.

An interim campus has been established at the Vineyards in north Naples, until the permanent campus is complete in late 2007.

**Edison Community College** celebrates 40 years of service to Southwest Florida. It offers associate degree programs (and recently added 4 year degree programs) to its 10,500 students on four campuses. Edison has been named as one of the top 25 community colleges in the United States by Community College Week magazine.

**International College** was founded in 1990 and now serves the needs of 1800 students. The main campus is in Naples, a branch campus is located in Fort Myers, and other learning sites exist in Lee and Charlotte counties. The school grants associate, bachelor and master degrees in a variety of disciplines. It's Center for Lifelong Learning offers classes attended by another 2000 per year.

## **County Gains Economic Recognition**

According to the Milken Institute, The Naples-Marco Island metro area is third on the Best Performing Cities Index for 2005. Much of the growth locally can be attributed to an increasing number of retirees and a rebound in the tourism industry after the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

The Milken Institute is an independent economic think tank. Its Best Performing Cities Index ranks 379 U.S. metropolitan areas based on their economic performance. The index measures job, wage and salary, and technology growth.

Naples/Collier County ranked first for both its percentage of job growth and percentage of salary growth over the past five years. Between 1999 and 2004, the area added about 27,000 jobs and wages grew by about \$1.73 billion. From 2003 to 2004, the Naples area gained nearly 6,000 jobs and wages increased by about \$442 million.

The study shows that the average age in the Naples area has been dropping over the past decade and thus the available work force is growing.

Collier County's economy continues to be driven by tourism, construction and agriculture. Between 2000 and 2004, professional and business services added the most jobs in Collier County. There was a 43.4 percent growth in those industries, which provide higher paying jobs to such professionals as accountants and attorneys. The second highest growth industry has been construction. There was a 23.5 percent growth in jobs between 2000 and 2004.

In May, 2007, *Inc. Magazine's* annual survey of the nation's boomtowns ranked the Naples/Marco Island area as sixth in the country and the Cape Coral/Fort Myers area as fourth. Growth in non-farm employment in these areas from 2001 to 2006 was 28.5% and 32.3% respectively.

## **Epilogue**

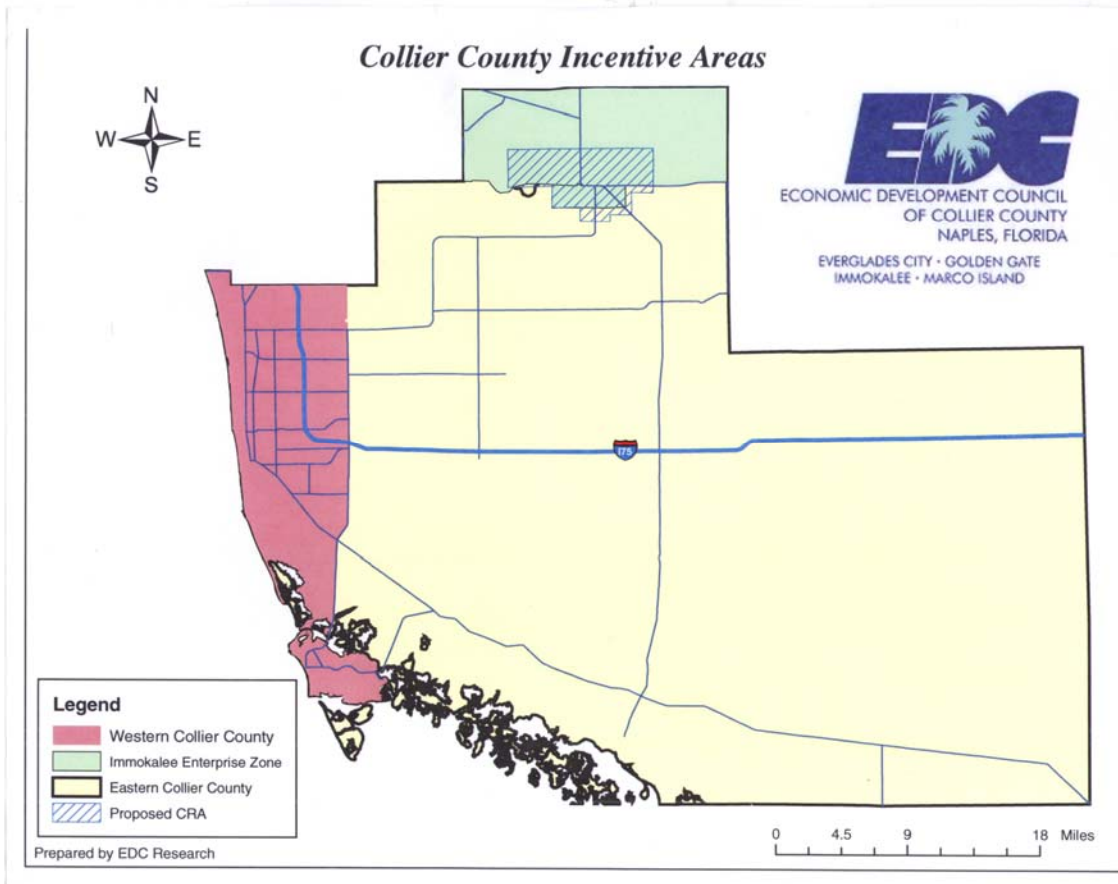
The Naples/Collier County area continues to show rapid growth in the population and available workforce. The area's climate, location and favorable business conditions will continue to ensure that this area will continue its rapid growth rate and attract the types of businesses that require a growing economy and a growing, available workforce.

**Business Incentive Programs**

Naples/Collier County has a number of incentive programs for businesses relocating to the County. Many of the programs are administered through the Economic Development Council of Collier County, the Collier County Board of Commissioners or the State of Florida.

The incentives are based primarily on the size of the business in terms of employees and also based on the investment the incoming business makes to their relocation or formation. For example, a business with 500 net new employees at a minimum of 115% of the current Collier County average wage and making an investment of \$30 million could be eligible for over \$8 million in incentives depending on their location within the County.

The County is divided into four incentive zones based on geography. They are the Florida Tradeport around the Immokalee Airport, the Immokalee Enterprise Zone, the Eastern Collier County Zone and the High Impact Zone located in the western urban area of the County.



The final incentive package is determined once all qualifications and requirements are identified and factored into the calculations. All incentives are subject to approval by the administrative agency responsible for allocating the funds. Applications for incentives need to be made prior to the final decision or any announcements or intent to locate or expand in the County.

### EASTERN COLLIER COUNTY BUSINESS RELOCATION ZONE EXAMPLE

The following is a description of the incentives available in the Eastern Collier County Zone where most of the future commercial development will be taking place. Potential incentives are divided into five categories: cash incentives, reimbursements, tax refunds/credits, free services and grants.

#### Cash Incentives

##### **Job Creation Investment Program**

The Job Creation Investment Program provides a performance-based incentive to mitigate the effects of rising fees associated with the costs of relocation. It is available to expanding pre-qualified businesses in Collier County. In order to participate in the program, a company must apply to the Economic Development Council of Collier County, prior to the commencement of operations.

This cash incentive requires the approval of the Collier County Board of County Commissioners and the Economic Development Council of Collier County.

##### **Community Development Block Grant**

The Collier County Community Development Block Grant program is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD provides entitlement funds to the County to fund a variety of projects which aid in the development of viable communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities, primarily for persons of low and moderate incomes. The Grant is available for job creation and is awarded upon application and fund ability. The incentive requires the approval of the Economic Development Council of Collier County.

#### Reimbursements

##### **Broadband Infrastructure Investment Program**

The Broadband Infrastructure Investment Program is intended to promote the installation and extension of broadband infrastructure. The program reimburses costs for fiber optic installations.

Installing advanced digital infrastructure allows qualifying companies to have their buildings designated “Smart Buildings” in Collier County. The business will be able to deduct system costs, up to a maximum amount, from their property taxes until the approved amount has been recovered.

This program requires the approval of the Collier County Board of County Commissioners and the Economic Development Council of Collier County.

### **Quick Response Training Program**

Quick Response Training is a customer-driven training program designed to assist new value-added businesses and provide existing Florida businesses the necessary training for expansion. The program is flexible and structured to respond quickly to meet the needs of relocating or expanding businesses. Reimbursable training expenses include: instructors’/trainers’ salaries, curriculum development, textbooks/manuals, and materials/supplies.

A local training provider, community college, area vocational-technical center or university, is selected by the business to serve as the fiscal agent for the grant funds and is available to assist in offsetting the cost of training new employees. This program requires the approval of Workforce Florida, Inc.

### **Economic Development Transportation Fund (Road Fund)**

The State of Florida has an Economic Development Transportation "Road Fund" that provides up to \$2 million in funding to units of local government to help pay for road construction and improvements for qualified companies. Permanent full-time positions must be created based on a formula that no more than \$5,000 will be used to create each position.

The road fund reimbursement requires the approval of the Governor's Office of Trade, Tourism, and Economic Development and the Collier County Board of County Commissioners. The funds are given to Collier County and then to the Developer in certain instances.

### **\*Fee Payment Assistance Program**

This program offsets a portion of impact fees related to construction of new or expanding buildings and is available to new or expanding businesses to Collier County in approved targeted industries, including computer & electronic component manufacturing (software reproduction) and computer programming/software development. A subordinate lien is placed on property for 10 years.

The company must create a minimum of 20 new jobs, the created jobs pay an average equal to or greater than 150% of Collier County's current private-sector average wage, which is \$34,856 (2004).

Approvals for this program are required from the Collier County Board of County Commissioners and the Economic Development Council of Collier County.

**OR**

**\*Property Tax Stimulus Program**

Eligible companies may receive a refund for the amount of ad valorem property taxes paid by the company and is available to new or expanding businesses to Collier County in approved targeted industries including computer & electronic component manufacturing (software reproduction) and computer programming/software development. This program offers the reimbursement of ad valorem property taxes for a period of 10 years.

As with the Fee Payment Assistance Program, the relocating or expanding company must create a minimum of 20 new jobs, the created jobs pay an average equal to or greater than 150% of Collier County's current private-sector average wage, which is \$34,856 (2004).

Approvals for this program are required from the Collier County Board of County Commissioners and the Economic Development Council of Collier County.

***\*Companies can only qualify for either the Fee Payment Assistance Program or the Property Tax Program, but not both.***

Tax Refunds/Credits

**Qualified Target Industry Tax Refund Program (QTI)**

This state program is a tax refund available to Florida businesses to encourage quality job growth in targeted high value-added industries including computer & electronic component manufacturing (software reproduction) and computer programming/software development. The local community where the company locates contributes 20 percent of the total tax refund. There is a cap of \$5 million. The tax refund includes corporate income, sales, ad valorem, intangible personal property, insurance premium, and certain other taxes.

Jobs must be in place as scheduled before credits are received. In order to participate in the program, a company must apply to Enterprise Florida and be certified by the Florida Governor's Office of Trade, Tourism and Economic Development (OTTED) prior to the commencement of operations.

This program requires the approval of the Florida Governor's Office of Trade, Tourism and Economic Development and the Collier County Board of County Commissioners

## Free Services

### **Fast Track Regulatory Process**

The Collier County Fast Track Regulatory Process provides expedited review through the development permitting process (may include Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), the site development process, and building permitting process. This service is available to all pre-qualified businesses in Collier County.

This process requires the approval of the Economic Development Council of Collier County.

### **Employee Recruitment and Client Assessment**

The Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board (SFWDB) staff assists with recruitment of employees. Client assessment normally involves one dedicated, full-time equivalent position assigned exclusively to this staffing initiative for a period of 3 years. With this large of an initiative, the number of people needed to help Cerner would be determined based upon need.

This assessment is available to pre-qualified businesses in Collier County and requires the approval of the Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board.

## Grants

### **Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board**

Multiple training grants are available for both new and incumbent workers. SFWDB works with employers to determine training needs, provide training or can customize training specific to the needs of the company. Reimbursable training expenses include: instructors'/trainers' salaries, curriculum development, textbooks/manuals, and materials/supplies.

The Grant Award is made to training providers on behalf of the business. This grant covers direct training costs, instructors' wages, curriculum development and resource materials. The Grant Award cannot be used for trainees' wages or equipment. Payment is monthly and goes directly to the local training provider. This Grant requires the approval of the Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board.