

# **2018 Eloise Community Redevelopment Plan Update**

April 04, 2018

## Introduction

Eloise is a vibrant and unique community in unincorporated Polk County with a diverse history. Eloise is located in the heart of Polk County between the cities of Eagle Lake and Winter Haven along both US Highway 17 and Snively Avenue. Historically this community provided housing to farmworkers that worked citrus industry in this region. The rich history of Eloise dates back to the 1890s when 250 people decided to make the area south of Lake Eloise their homestead. The Eloise rail station, built in 1896, was the hub for produce distribution that helped move tomatoes and vegetables to the northern marketplaces. In 1934, John and Tom Snively opened the Polk Packing Company, which was the largest economic boom the community has ever experienced. The population swelled to 900 in 1945, which resembles the current day population figure of 1,160. At one point, the Snively family employed 1,400 people in Polk County. The Snively packing plant and other related companies closed in 1971, marking the end of citrus production in Eloise. Although citrus production remains viable in Polk County, production of citrus has been hampered by citrus greening, citrus canker, and the southward matriculation of the frost zone. Additionally, many of the Orange producers have migrated to the southern two-thirds of the state to avoid complications that arise from freezes.

In 1999, lacking basic community needs, such as, sewer, adequate water pressure, paved streets, and street lighting, the County established the Eloise Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). Since the CRA was established, the County has invested significant funds to enhance the water distribution system, bring sewer to the area, pave roads and improve the drainage throughout Eloise. With much of the basic infrastructure needs being addressed over the past 18 years, the community priorities have now moved to improving economic viability and improving housing conditions for all of its residents.

With employment opportunities waning since the decline of the citrus industry, Eloise has been uniquely impacted. Access to higher wage jobs is a challenge for the community for multiple reasons. Educational attainment remains low with over 52% of the community's workforce having not completed a high school equivalent diploma. Getting to and from employment opportunities also provides a significant obstacle with many in the community lacking access to a reliable means of transportation. The transit route that runs along Snively Avenue has 90-minute headways and circulates through Winter Haven at which point a connection would need to be made to travel to Lakeland or other employment centers outside of Winter Haven. This could potentially extend a trip by two sometimes three hours. Improving access to employment and increasing educational attainment/job skills training will create a better environment in Eloise and catalyze homeownership.

Residents in Eloise have an abundance of pride for their community. However, the rate of homeownership is low, which has perpetuated the substandard housing conditions. Approximately, one in every two homes are rentals. With all of the housing stock being single-family dwellings, the rate at which homes are rented is high. This could have been due to the housing market collapse in 2008. The majority of the rented properties are deteriorating mobile homes. This contrasts with high level of community pride seen in Eloise. Coupled with low and very low-income levels, homeownership can be a major hurdle, especially transitioning from low

monthly rents.

The County should be commended for nearly completing all of the strategies outlined in the 2000 plan. Some of those accomplishments have included enhanced utilities and drainage along 1st Street through 9th Street, establishing the Johnny and Freda Brooks Eloise Resource Center, assisting with housing opportunities, and installing street lighting in unsafe unlit areas of Eloise. The purpose of this redevelopment plan supplement is to update the CRA's strategies to make them relevant to the current needs of the community. This plan is not meant to replace or supplant the 2000 plan as the foundational principles still apply to some degree.

The strategies outlined in this plan were designed to prioritize the existing needs of the community and maximize the spending power of the CRA, which is scheduled to sunset in 12 years.

## Existing Conditions

### CRA Overview

The Eloise CRA was established in 1998 after the 1997 Declaration of Slum and Blight ascertained that 76 percent of building structures were substandard. There are approximately 665 acres of land within the Community Redevelopment Area, including the public right-of-way.

The base year for TIF revenue was set to 1999 at a value of \$12,434,610. Taxable values in the CRA saw a rapid increase between 2005 and 2009 and declined from 2010 to 2014 during the recession. Taxable values have been on the rise since 2015 as the market has continued to rebound. At its peak, the total taxable value in the CRA reached \$26,399,442 in 2009, while in 2016 total taxable value was \$19,409,978. As of 2017, the positive trend has continued and is expected keep the same trajectory in the near future.

### Population

Eloise has experienced one percent annual population growth between 2000 and 2010, increasing from approximately 975 residents to 1,075. There are approximately 306 households (US Census). The average household size in Eloise is 3.52, which is almost one person larger than Polk County's 2.59 average size. The median age in Eloise is 30.5 versus 39.8 in Polk County.

Almost two-thirds (59%) of the Winter Haven and the surrounding area population is white with almost fifty percent identifying as Hispanic. The 2017 ESRI diversity index rates Eloise at 82 and Polk County at 63, which is similar to the US (62).

Eloise's median household income of \$36,689 falls below Polk County's \$45,704. Average household income in Eloise remains lower than the County's at \$47,686 per household compared to \$61,763. Eloise's educational attainment of the workforce is low with over 52% of the community's workforce having not completed a high school equivalent diploma compared to 15% in the County as a whole. The

unemployment rate in Eloise is approximately 11%, which is considerably higher than the County's 4% mark.<sup>1</sup>

## **Eloise Tapestry Lifestyle Segments**

Tapestry segmentation provides an accurate, detailed description of America's neighborhoods. U.S. residential areas are divided into 67 distinctive segments based on their socioeconomic and demographic composition. Then ESRI further classifies the segments into LifeModes and Urbanization Groups. The two Tapestry Segments in Eloise represent nearly 100 percent of the residents. While Florida is historically known as a state comprised of a primarily older demographic, the median age for the primary Tapestry Segment present in Eloise is 28.3 years of age. Although lower income, the Tapestry Segments reveal a younger, family oriented demographic than traditionally present within Florida.

### **Barrios Urbanos**

Family is central within these diverse communities. Hispanics make up more than 70% of the residents. More than one in four are foreign born, bringing rich cultural traditions to these neighborhoods in the urban outskirts. Dominating this market are younger families with children or single-parent households with multiple generations living under the same roof. These households balance their budgets carefully but also indulge in the latest trends and purchase with an eye to brands. Most workers are employed in skilled positions across the manufacturing, construction, or retail trade sectors.

#### **Demographic Profile**

- Median Age: 34.8
- Average Household Size: 2.50
- Median Household Income: \$37,000

### **Heartland Communities**

Well settled and close-knit, Heartland Communities are semirural and semiretired. These older householders are primarily homeowners, and many have paid off their mortgages. Their children have moved away, but they have no plans to leave their homes. Their hearts are with the country; they embrace the slower pace of life here but actively participate in outdoor activities and community events. Traditional and patriotic, these residents support their local businesses, always buy American, and favor domestic driving vacations over foreign plane trips.

#### **Demographic Profile**

- Median Age: 41.5
- Average Household Size: 2.38
- Median Household Income: \$39,000

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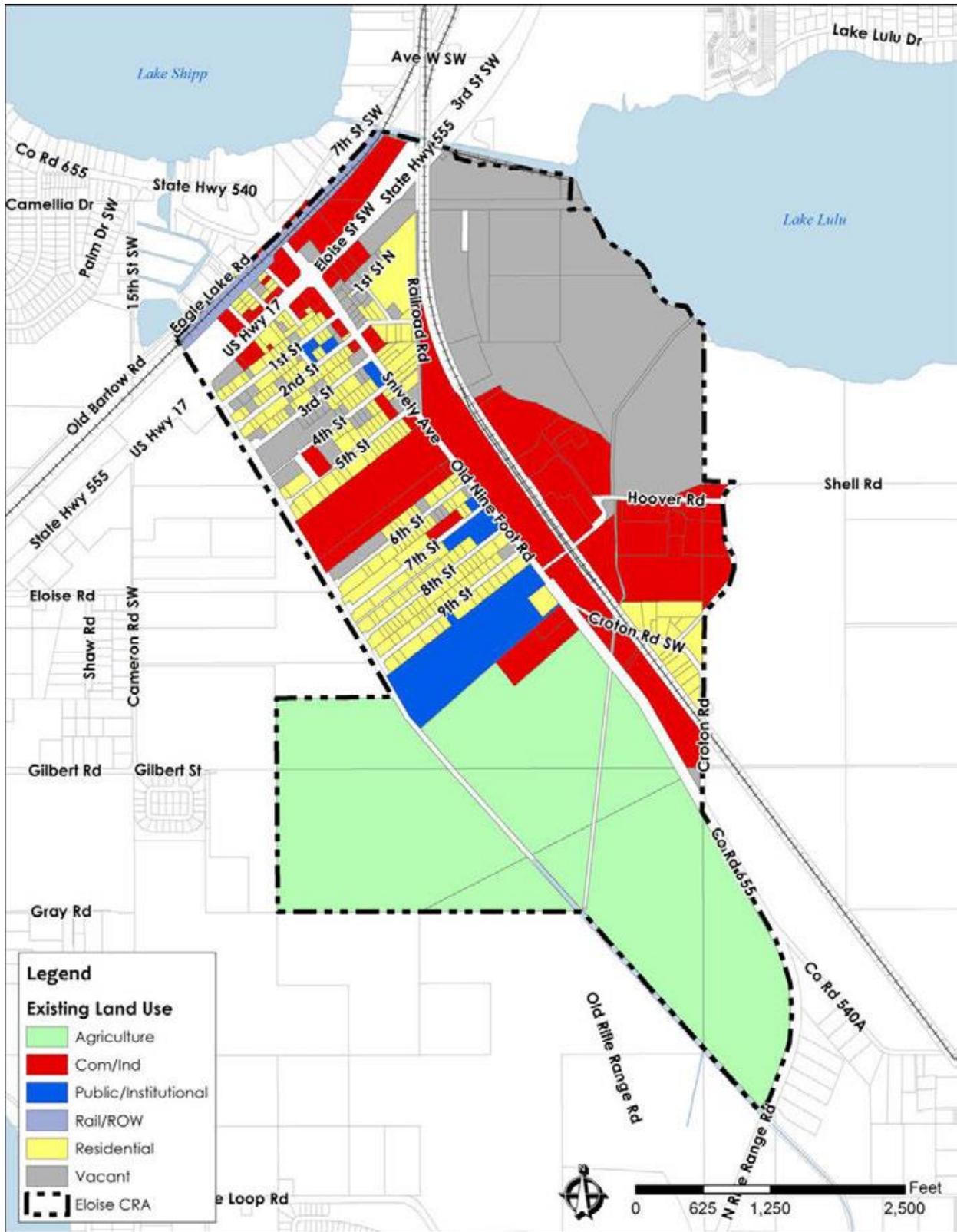
<sup>1</sup> SOURCE: US CENSUS, 2010; ACS, 2017

## Existing Land Use

The predominant existing land use in Eloise is agriculture (active pasture) which spans 38 percent of the total CRA. The next two most prevalent land uses are vacant and commercial/industrial at 24 percent and 20 percent, respectively. Residential land uses only account for 12 percent of the existing land uses in the CRA by acreage.

<i>Land Use</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Agriculture	225	38%
Commercial/Industrial	119	20%
Rail/ROW	8	1%
Residential	72	13%
Vacant	141	24%
Public/Institutional	24	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>589</b>	<b>100%</b>

Existing land uses determine the CRA's tax base, which then defines the amount of funds available to the CRA for redevelopment projects. Vacant, or unimproved land, generates less tax revenue than developed, or improved land. Almost 30 percent of the land in the CRA (vacant and institutional land) generates little to no tax revenue, the 141 acres of vacant land present an opportunity to enhance the CRA through new residential and commercial development and generate additional tax increment revenue.



**EXISTING LAND USE MAP**

## Unified Land Development Code

The County’s Comprehensive Plan includes an adopted Future Land Use Map (FLUM) within the Future Land Use Element (FLUE) that depicts future development allowed within the unincorporated areas of the County through the 2030 planning horizon. The FLUE not only identifies the future development pattern, but also allows for the identification of future infrastructure needs and capital budgeting needs.

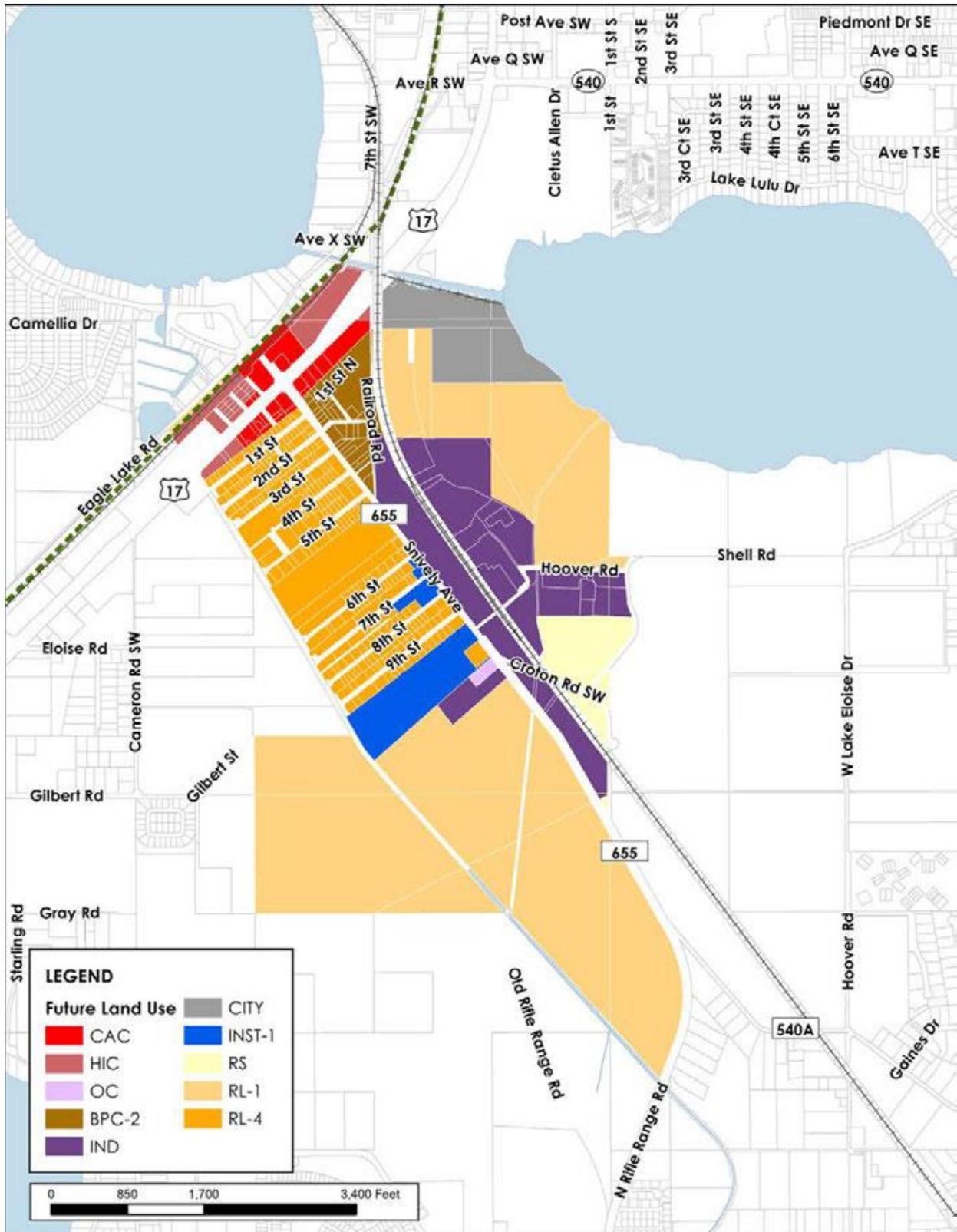
The primary future land use within the CRA is Residential Low Density (RL) representing approximately 388 acres, or roughly 65% of the total redevelopment area. The second largest future land use category is Industrial (IND), which covers just over 13.6% of the CRA.

Polk County’s regulatory structure is unique in that the FLUM also functions as the zoning map. This makes navigating the development process easier for the layperson.

### Future Land Use

<b><i>FLU Category</i></b>	<b><i>Description</i></b>	<b><i># Parcels</i></b>	<b><i>Area in Acres</i></b>	<b><i>Percent of Total</i></b>
<b><i>RL-1 &amp; RL-4</i></b>	Residential-Low: provide areas for low density residential development in the urban areas of unincorporated Polk County – RL-1 requires a minimum 40k sq ft lot and RL-4 requires a minimum 6k sq ft lot	13	388.5	65.9%
<b><i>IND</i></b>	Industrial: provide areas for general manufacturing, processing, and distribution of goods	3	80.5	13.6%
<b><i>CITY</i></b>	Incorporated lands	3	29.8	5.1%
<b><i>INST-1</i></b>	Institutional: primarily characterized by private and public-service structures	7	22.5	3.8%
<b><i>RS</i></b>	Residential-Suburban: characterized by single-family dwelling units and duplex units	4	18.4	3.1%
<b><i>BPC-2</i></b>	Business-Park Centers: promote employment opportunities within the region by allowing for the establishment of office parks, research and development parks, areas for light-industrial facilities, distribution centers, and mixed-use employment parks	1	16.5	2.8%
<b><i>HIC</i></b>	High-Impact Commercial Centers: intended to accommodate specific commercial needs that, because of their intensity and/ or particular aspect of their operation, can be expected to have a measurable adverse impact upon adjacent and nearby properties	2	15.9	2.7%

<b><i>FLU Category</i></b>	<b><i>Description</i></b>	<b><i># Parcels</i></b>	<b><i>Area in Acres</i></b>	<b><i>Percent of Total</i></b>
<b><i>CAC</i></b>	Community Activity Centers: intended to accommodate the shopping needs of residents living within the community and generally contain a shopping center and other commercial and office uses within close proximity	1	14.5	2.5%
<b><i>OC</i></b>	Office Center: accommodate the office needs of the community they serve	1	1.0	0.2%
<b><i>CE</i></b>	Commercial Enclave: concentrations of commercial/office uses and zoning districts which are located outside of Activity Centers and/or Linear Commercial Corridors and whose future development or redevelopment will not degrade the County's growth management program	1	1.0	0.2%
<b><i>Total</i></b>		<b><i>36</i></b>	<b><i>589</i></b>	<b><i>100%</i></b>



FUTURE LAND USE MAP

## **Transportation Infrastructure**

### **Automobile**

Snively Avenue is considered an urban collector and US Highway 17 is considered a principal arterial. These roadways are designed to accommodate large volumes of traffic. Both roadways within the Eloise area are operating significantly below their available capacities. Although both roads operate within their capacity constraints, Snively Avenue and US Highway 17 experience large volumes of tractor-trailer traffic. Many of the large trucks utilize Snively Avenue to access the industrial district in Eloise. Because there are no stop conditions along Snively Avenue, entering Snively Avenue at any time of day is difficult and dangerous.

The section of Snively Avenue adjacent to Snively Elementary School has inadequate infrastructure to support the safe loading and unloading of school buses. In addition to navigating Snively Avenue with the large truck volume, pedestrians are at risk due to the lack of traffic calming methods along the corridor. There is one flashing light in front of the school, but does little to slow traffic, especially northbound where the road transitions from two lanes to four lanes.

There are no plans in the Polk TPO Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) to improve any of the roadways or bicycle/ pedestrian facilities in Eloise.

### **Streetscapes, Bike and Pedestrian**

Pedestrian facilities within the CRA in some cases have not been maintained. Most evident is the impassable segments of sidewalk along the east side of Snively Avenue adjacent to the industrial properties. During the public participation portion of the update, many residents described unsafe pedestrian conditions near Snively Elementary. Additionally, there are no signalized intersection within Eloise along Snively Avenue, which allows motorists to maintain high rates of speed through community with no street calming controls.

The CRA spearheaded a street lighting project in 2016 from First Street to American Superior Boulevard across from Snively Elementary School. There remains some areas that need additional lighting. Some of the lighting problems have persisted due to lighting on private land that projects onto the right-of-way that have not been maintained.

The Polk TPO has a planned paved multi-use trail that runs along US Highway 17 from Downtown Winter Haven to Bartow.

### **Public Transportation**

Eloise is served by Citrus Connection route numbers 22, 25 and 40. Route 40 circulates from Eloise to Winter Haven and through Eagle Lake. The route only operates Monday through Friday with one and a half hour headways and on weekends only operates two times on Saturdays. Routes 22 and 25 connect Eloise to Bartow and Fort Meade. These two routes also have 90-minute headways.

### **Parking**

As it stands today, parking on an average day does not pose a problem for CRA visitors. The parking supply consists of private lots and public on street. There are several informal non-striped parking areas on vacant lots and adjacent to the Snively- Brooks Park.

### Wayfinding & Signage

Currently no wayfinding signage exists within the Eloise CRA; however, the CRA is working on the design of a gateway feature entering Eloise northbound along Snively Avenue. Gateway signage and banner-adorned light poles are great design aesthetics to establish Eloise’s identity. This effort is relatively inexpensive and provides for a sense of place and creates pride in the community.

### Recreation

Eloise is fortunate to have a collocated elementary school and park facility. Snively Elementary and Snively-Brooks Park share the same property at Snively Avenue, immediately south of 9th Street. The park includes two baseball/softball fields, walking trail, pavilions, soccer field, covered and uncovered basketball courts and playground. Residents identified a need for indoor recreational activities, such as a gym, weight room, and activity center.

### Environmental

Eloise sits between several lakes, Lake Lulu, Lake Eloise, Eagle Lake, Lake Shipp, and Lake McLeod, most of which are connected by the 100-year floodplain that covers much of Eloise. This can have a limiting impact on the amount and type of development that can occur within the CRA.

Wetlands can also limit development; however, their importance to the environment as a natural water purifier has elevated the value of these resources. There are several wetlands within the CRA, most of which are contained in the northeast quadrant of the CRA, immediately south of Lake Lulu. When feasible, development should avoid impacting wetlands, as the mitigation costs could decrease the economic viability of a project.

### EXISTING CONDITIONS SUMMARY

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities
<i>Existing Land Use</i>	Strong Industrial/ Commercial district, nearly 20% of the CRA.	40% of the CRA is vacant, but most lies within the 100-year floodplain.	Vacant land has both commercial and residential development potential.

	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<b><i>Zoning &amp; FLU</i></b>	Both maps include a land use pattern that is conducive to this small community. Unified LDC/CP provides a user-friendly system for developing property.	No non-residential uses allowed west of Snively Avenue.	Redevelopment opportunities exist, but there needs to be consensus on the type of future redevelopment the community desires.
<b><i>Infrastructure</i></b>	Significant strides have been made to connect the residential area to sewer and enhancements have been made to the water and drainage systems.	Lighting in certain areas continues to be a concern.	Lighting and pedestrian safety should be evaluated in a comprehensive manner to determine specific needs.
<b><i>Road Network</i></b>	Little congestion is present within the CRA.	Snively is a trucking route and home to an elementary school; existing alignment is not conducive to a safe route for residents and students.	Utilize the ROW along Snively to create a pedestrian friendly environment safe for all ages.
<b><i>Mobility</i></b>	Eloise residents have access to transit and pedestrian facilities within the CRA that do connect bus stops to Eloise destinations.	Pedestrian safety needs improvement throughout. Connection to grocery, retail, and job opportunities is lacking.	Establish a vanpooling service that provides transportation services to residents in Eloise.
<b><i>Employment</i></b>	With the large industrial district within Eloise, there are some employment opportunities within the CRA.	The unemployment rate in Eloise is over 11%, which is significantly higher than the County and national rate of 4%.	Connect the employment base with employment centers within the region through alternative modes of travel (e.g. ride sharing)
<b><i>Recreation</i></b>	Snively-Brooks Park and the Resource Center are great facilities for interaction and recreation.	Limited indoor activity areas and no public pool facilities in the area.	Establish a partnership with an indoor recreational provider or the County to create more recreational opportunities for Eloise residents and local area.

## Public Input

The programs and strategies in this plan were developed based on community input received through multiple community engagement methods. These methods included online surveys, in-person surveys, mobile workshop, public workshop, open house, basemap exercise, and advisory board meetings and discussion. A summary of each is provided in this section.

The kickoff of the public engagement process occurred at the Hispanic Heritage Festival at the Eloise Resource Center on September 23, 2017. It was determined that the synergy between the festival and the rollout of the plan update was a great way to generate interest in the community. During the mobile workshop at the festival, a map of the CRA was available for people to place dots on their home or place they frequented the most. Light refreshments and online surveys (via Wi-Fi connected tablets) were given to participants that visited the booth.

Of the total 49 responses received, 21 responses were received during the festival. Due to the large Hispanic population in Eloise, the online survey (SurveyMonkey) was developed in English and Spanish. Both options were available to the public. In some instances during the festival and public workshop, a member of the project team assisted the respondents with filling out the survey.

Two days later, the public workshop and open house was held on September 25, 25 participants attended the open house or workshop.

## Tax Increment Revenue Projections

The tax increment revenue in Eloise grew rapidly between 2002 and 2010, from about \$15,000 to just under \$110,000. After 2010, when the Great Recession was still affecting communities throughout central Florida, increment revenue hit a low in 2013 at \$35,000. In 2017, the Eloise Community Redevelopment Agency reported close to \$45,000 in annual revenue. Revenue projections assume a 95 percent collection rate and 2.5 percent annual growth in taxable values in Eloise. Between 2017 and 2030, the projected cumulative amount of tax increment revenue for the Eloise CRA is just under \$945,000.

## Strategic Goals and Approach

Improving living conditions within the community has been the priority of the Eloise Community Redevelopment Area since its inception in 1999. County improvements have primarily focused on stabilizing the neighborhood through major utility improvements and the creation of the highly successful Resource Center. S&ME was hired July 15, 2017 to assist the Eloise Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) with developing new priorities for the remaining 12 years until sunset. An extensive community outreach and engagement platform was developed in order to determine community priorities for this remaining timeframe.

During the Hispanic Heritage Festival and the public workshop on September 23 and 25, respectively, participants described the current economic and living conditions. Two themes persisted throughout the discussions and survey responses. The CRA has developed and spent considerable capital on housing programs designed to improve the living conditions in Eloise. These efforts have been stymied due to the costs of transitioning to traditional bricks and mortar homes as well as a lack of interest by outsiders in the Eloise community. Rental occupancy of homes in Eloise is at approximately 38%, which is significant in a single-family residential area. Many of these rental units are mobile homes, some of which are aging and in disrepair. Income levels within Eloise are very low compared to the County and the surrounding jurisdictions with nearly 39% of the community living under the poverty level (\$24,600 household income).

For these reasons, near term CRA programs and initiatives should be directed at a strategy to increase home ownership and to provide more access and opportunities for employment. Outlined below is a multipronged approach to target the CRA's efforts on enhancing the economic and living conditions in Eloise:

- **Create greater access to higher wage jobs to the employment base in Eloise.** Employment options for Eloise residents have been limited in recent years due to the severe lack of reliable transportation options. The majority of Eloise residents do not have access to traditional forms of transportation. Although one transit route is available to residents along Snively Avenue, 90-minute headways make planning trips difficult. The CRA shall explore a public-private ridesharing partnership. This effort could be created quickly with the current CRA reserves. An easy way to get this program started is for the CRA to purchase or share in the purchase of an 18-passenger van and hire or engage an enterprising individual to operate the van. Scheduling and pickup/drop-off locations would depend on employment opportunities identified in the second program.
- As described above, access to employment for Eloise residents is difficult due to a variety of factors, such as a lack of local and regional partners that assist in workforce placement. The CRA should **leverage relationships with the Winter Haven EDC, CFDC, and CareerSource Polk** to create opportunities with large employers (e.g. LEGOLAND, Winter Haven Hospital, Lakeland Regional Hospital, hotel chains, Polk State, Publix, etc.). Eloise's demographics and employment base make it a candidate for economic development grant opportunities. Achieving this status will allow the CRA to leverage this designation to open up significant grant and funding opportunities the community would not otherwise have. The CRA should prepare a short document that summarizes the current economic conditions in Eloise and submit to the

Department of Economic Opportunity.

- **Keep the residents of Eloise in Eloise with sustainable housing options.** To keep families of existing residents in Eloise, a program that helps ease the transition from renting to home ownership should be developed. This program should provide down payment assistance to help overcome the gap between rent and a mortgage payment. The intent of this program is to provide homeownership opportunities to those with ties in the community and allow them to grow roots in Eloise. Access to existing housing programs offered by the county and state can be increased with informational sessions and continued outreach. During the update process, it was clear that the people genuinely care about this community. Building on this care for this community will only help enhance the standard of living and the conditions that have persisted since the blight study was prepared in 1998.
- **Expand and improve pedestrian facilities in Eloise, particularly near Snively Elementary School.** Due to the size and compactness of Eloise, many of the internal trips are pedestrians walking along Snively Avenue. This includes children traveling to school on a daily basis. With no signalized intersection or marked crosswalks in this area, pedestrian safety is a major concern. Additionally, the school and the CRA should continue to explore alternative bus solutions that move the stacking buses off Snively Avenue.
- **Enhance community aesthetics to help achieve a sense of place and a sense of community pride.** Eloise is a unique community and should be on display for visitors and residents alike. A gateway at the entry of Eloise, from the Wauneta area, will reinforce a community identity. Banners and landscaping lining Snively Avenue and US 17 would also attract attention and increase awareness of Eloise.

The purpose of this approach is to continue the momentum created by the current CRA directives. Given the limited funding the CRA will have to spend over the next 13 years, the approach outlined above seeks to maximize the impact and improvement of the Eloise community. Additional strategies are outlined on the following pages that provide day-to-day strategies meant to support the five-step approach.

# Goals

## Economic Development Strategies

### Objective:

Continue to leverage regional assets and partnerships with the local economic development organizations to establish more employment opportunities.

- Coordinate with the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) as well as other Local, State, and Federal agencies to identify current and future grant funding opportunities to finance economic development activities.
- Seek partnerships with large employers (e.g. LEGOLAND, Winter Haven Hospital, Lakeland Regional Hospital, hotel chains, Polk State, Publix, etc.) within the region to establish employment and transportation opportunities.
- Establish frequent coordination with Winter Haven EDC and Central Florida Development Council to ensure Eloise is discussed as a potential location for employment centers.
- Actively seek workforce-training opportunities with CareerSource Polk.
- Explore the efficacy of establishing training and education opportunities at the Eloise Resource Center.
- Capitalize on the CSX railroad for recruiting distribution and industrial users.
- Continue to identify underutilized parcels for redevelopment opportunities within the CRA.
- Actively recruit and incentivize a grocery(s) to establish in Eloise.

## Growth Management Strategies

### Objective:

- Continue to engage with the development community and the County Planning Department to understand future land use and regulatory restrictions within Eloise.
- Review land development regulations to determine if appropriate existing regulatory controls are still applicable to Eloise.
- Evaluate the prohibition on non-residential uses west of Snively Avenue and determine acceptable non-residential uses.
- Evaluate alternative housing options to supplement existing housing stock.

## Housing and Code Enforcement Strategies

### Objective:

- Continue to address substandard housing conditions.
- Establish Down Payment and Closing Cost Assistance programs.
- Establish a closing the gap program assisting the transition from renter to home ownership.
- Continue to collaborate with the Polk County SHIP program and Local Housing Partnership.
- Identify additional lots for Habitat for Humanity home sites.
- Explore incentivizing alternative affordable housing construction.
- Continue to provide assistance for emergency repairs to bricks and mortar homes.
- Continue to provide assistance for substantial housing rehabilitation.
- Explore opportunities to assist with house reconstruction.
- Periodically survey the Eloise CRA for code enforcement and coordinate with the enforcement officer.
- Continue community oriented policing measures within the Eloise CRA and enhance police presence in known problem areas.
- Seek grant funding and other opportunities to establish a community garden or farmers market.
- Seek grant funding (i.e. Healthy Food Financing Initiative) to analyze food desert issues in the community.

## Infrastructure Strategies

### Objective:

- Continue to enhance utility coverage and capacity to ensure adequate availability for redevelopment projects.
- Identify existing utility (water, sewer, stormwater) coverage and capacity deficits within Eloise.
- Assist the County and residents with funding and improvement opportunities for utility coverage within Eloise.
- Explore grant and public-private partnership opportunities to finance any gaps in coverage or capacity within Eloise.
- Assist residents and businesses with costs associated with connecting to the sewer system.

## Recreation and Open Space Strategies

### Objective:

- Establish more recreational opportunities in Eloise.
- Enhance existing parks with spaces and activities for children, youth, and adults. Playground, trails, exercise stations, grills, pergola, etc.
- Pursue opportunities to create indoor recreational facilities that promote health and wellness and establish programming that addresses the recreational needs of the community. Coordinate with the County Parks and Recreation department to determine the feasibility of establishing an indoor recreation facility in Eloise.
- Seek partnership opportunities with recreation providers to expand outdoor activities.
- Seek grant funding opportunities from the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) to assist with construction of such a facility.

## Beautification Strategies

### Objective:

- Enhance the aesthetics and showcase the character of the Eloise Community.
- Establish a gateway feature along Snively Ave & US 17 to increase the sense of place.
- Create themed banners to adorn light poles within Eloise to enhance the aesthetics and sense of place.
- Design unified landscaping improvements along Snively Ave that enhance businesses.
- Create murals program in coordination with local businesses, artists, and residents; identify locations for murals.
- Provide façade improvement programs or partnerships to improve the aesthetics of Eloise's eligible commercial buildings.
- Provide façade improvement grants to eligible bricks and mortar homes.

## Mobility Strategies

### Objective:

- Increase connectivity and safety to and within Eloise for residents and to have improved access to employment, retail, services and education.
- Assess the feasibility of constructing midblock crossings on Snively Avenue with pedestrian signalization.

- Apply for a FDOT Safe Routes to School grant to improve pedestrian access to Snively Elementary.
- Assess the feasibility of changing the bus queueing along Snively Avenue.
- Explore the feasibility of funding (or partnering) the reconstruction of Snively Avenue as a complete street, emphasizing pedestrian and bicycle safety.
- Explore constructing a traffic light at Snively Avenue and American Superior in front of the school or a reduction in speed to 25 or 30 miles per hour.
- Explore opportunities to install sidewalks on residential streets from 1st through 9th Streets.
  - Evaluate opportunities to facilitate a ride share program for the residents of Eloise to improve connections to employment and services.
- Continue to coordinate with the Polk TPO and the County Planning Division to implement the Transit Corridors and Centers Overlay to achieve enhanced pedestrian environment