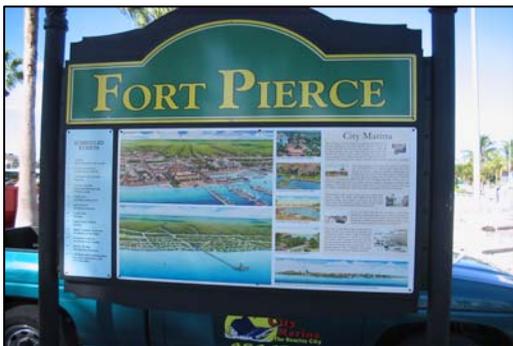


Impact Projects / Activities

To seize the momentum, it is important that a short-term project be undertaken. The following are a list of possible impact projects or actions.

Establishment of Implementation Committee

The City of LaBelle should form an Implementation Committee that would assist in maintaining focus and energy in the downtown redevelopment process. This Committee would be appointed by the Mayor and City Commission and have support of City Staff. The Committee should help the Mayor and Commission to organize and implement the goals and objectives of the plan. The Committee should coordinate with the Hendry County Economic Development Council and



Informational kiosks should be used to convey the theme and history of downtown

the Greater LaBelle Chamber of Commerce. The primary task of the Implementation Committee should be to make a recommendation regarding a CRA.

Promote a Theme

Impact Projects:

- Establish an Oversight Committee
- Promote a Theme
- Tie Yesterday to Today
- Preserve Downtown Character
- Create a Logo
- Obtain Professional Assistance
- Establish a Pilot Program
- Organize Community Gatherings

In order to better promote Downtown LaBelle as a separate and unique place, a theme should be developed. As Clewiston calls itself the “Sweetest City” or Downtown Fort Myers is known as the “River District”, LaBelle should develop a theme for their downtown area that sets it apart from the rest of the city. A leading concept would be to refer to this area as the “Walking District.”

Tie Yesterday to Today

It is important to acknowledge LaBelle’s past and

to preserve its historical context and places. Historical markers or kiosks that include historical photographs and a written history should be placed in key locations. The first location can be in the park overlooking the Caloosahatchee River.



Preserve Downtown Character

To preserve the character of the downtown, our intention is to respect the built environment while improving and enhancing the hardscape and landscape of this area. This can be accomplished by creating development standards for Downtown LaBelle that will encourage development that is consistent with what is currently there.

Development of Downtown Logo

While the City of LaBelle has a newly established logo, it is believed that the downtown area should create a slightly modified version; something that sets it apart as a distinctly special, and separate district from the rest of the city.

Obtain Professional Marketing Assistance

It is recommended that LaBelle obtain professional marketing assistance to help implement the vision.



Sidewalk Improvements

Downtown LaBelle Committee

Kick Off Projects

A list of “kick off” projects has been created to get the ball rolling and to continue the momentum created by the visioning process. These

projects are to establish a pilot streetscape program, create identification and signage that sets the downtown apart as a special place, create a veterans’ memorial park, and implement the wharf grant.



Street Beautification

Downtown LaBelle Committee

Establish Pilot Streetscape Program

As a result of the Transportation Workshop held

in January of 2008, it is believed that LaBelle can establish a pilot streetscape project. The city should pick an east/west side street location in Downtown LaBelle in which to apply all streetscape designs and improvement recommendations. In this location, streetlights, landscaping, seating and everything that the city wishes to incorporate into its streetscape design would be employed. The purpose of this program is to create not only a sense of moving forward with the downtown revitalization efforts, but to create in one place, that special look desired for downtown.

The completion of this project will facilitate the desire to move on to another street, and so on, and will allow improvement efforts to be approached in a more cost-effective manner. It is thought that the best way in which to employ this program is to start at a prominent location either on the north or south end of the downtown core. When this area is complete, another street can be chosen along the opposite end of the downtown core. This same process would continue, working toward the center of downtown until the entire area is complete.



Seating Encourages Street Activity

Downtown LaBelle Committee

Identification/Signage

As mentioned previously, with the establishment of a separate logo, and as a part of the effort to give the downtown core its own identity, it is recommended that signage with a unique character and design be developed for wayfinding and for markers within this area.



Special gateway features establish the entrance to the downtown

Downtown LaBelle Committee



Veterans Memorial Park

A veteran’s memorial park has been designed for a parcel on the corner of SR 80 and Main Street, in front of the U-Save Grocery Store.

Not only will this park honor the memories of those who have lost their lives while defending our country, it will also serve as both additional open space for the City of LaBelle and as a gateway feature into the downtown area. Monuments to commemorate each significant war fought and the LaBelle citizens who fought in them, as well as landscaping, benches and a reflection pool have been included in the design.

Implementation of Wharf Grant

LaBelle has been awarded a grant to upgrade and improve their dock and wharf area.



Implementation of this grant in coordination with the park plan would allow this feature to easily tie into the overall park concept and design.

Establishment of Periodic Community Gatherings

To promote the revitalization of the downtown area, a schedule of community gatherings and events should be developed so that events are offered at regular intervals.

Not only will such gatherings strengthen community ties, they will also create an attraction and a reason to go downtown. Hopefully, as word gets out, people from all around the area as well as tourists will come to Downtown LaBelle to enjoy the restaurants and shops in addition to these events.

Farmer’s Market

One idea to bring life and activity to the downtown area of LaBelle is to create a farmers’ market.



Not only would this create an additional draw to the downtown area, this activity would also give area farmers and local growers a chance to showcase their goods.

Arts and Crafts Fairs

Other types of event that will draw people into Downtown LaBelle are arts and craft fairs. Specific streets can be blocked off between Bridge Street and Main Street so that passersby will see the event and will want to stop and browse. Arts and craft fairs will also bring culture into downtown. Local shops and vendors can plan for these events, and offer to set up booths or opt to stay open later.

River-Based Entertainment

River-based entertainment, such as fishing contests, water ski shows or boat shows would also encourage people to come downtown.



Cardboard Boat Races

www.braddockheritage.org

Car and Motorcycle Clubs

Area car and motorcycle clubs would attract interest from local enthusiasts by holding shows in Downtown LaBelle.



www.SwampCabbageFestival.org

Bikers meet at the Swamp Cabbage Festival



www.SwampCabbageFestival.org

Live Entertainment at Barron Park

Concerts

An excellent way to bring people into the downtown is to offer music in the park or a concert series featuring local and regional bands and talent.

Encourage Local Participation and Talent

Encouraging local talent strengthens community bonds and allows local artists and musicians to let their talents be known. Talent shows or plays could be a means for good entertainment and a way for the community to come together in a fun and light-hearted environment.