



Collier County, FL

(Population 333,000)

If you are a dynamic, well qualified economic development professional who is looking for a challenge and a great place to live and work plus the opportunity to start a new Office of Business and Economic Development, this job is for you.

Collier County is located on southwest Florida's Paradise Coast, approximately 150 miles south of Tampa. The area – including resort and retirement destinations Naples and Marco Island -- is famous for its pristine beaches, magnificent sunsets, acclaimed Naples Philharmonic Orchestra, opera, theater, museums, zoo, new universities and an abundance of championship golf courses (some reports say the most golf holes per capita in the U.S.). Collier County, a diverse mix of urban and rural areas and coastlines, also is the western gateway to the world famous Everglades. In fact, the Everglades and Big Cypress National Parks cover two thirds of the County's total

land mass and are a nature lover's paradise. One of the largest geographical counties east of the Mississippi River, the County encompasses more than 2,000 square miles.

Once considered a sleepy retirement community, the area is now home to a growing number of permanent residents and young families looking for a premier lifestyle and new opportunities. The area answers that demand with a nationally recognized parks system (including a water park), an expansive library system, A-rated schools, local shops and boutiques galore, Saks, Nordstrom's, restaurants for every palate and pocketbook, and surprisingly affordable housing. A three-bedroom, two-bath home in a nice neighborhood can be purchased for between \$250,000 and \$300,000. Crime is low and people are friendly. Young or old, resident or tourist, Collier County has something for everyone.

History

Collier County has a rich history. Although it was home to the Calusa Indians long before the arrival of Juan Ponce de Leon in early 1513, the area remained virtually uninhabited until after the Civil War when handfuls of farmers and squatters began making their way south, and Americans from northern climes began building winter cottages in Naples. Early pioneers fished and hunted for a living, raised crops of cabbage, peppers, tomatoes and pineapples, dug oysters and clams, made charcoal, sold bird plumes, and trapped otters and alligators for their pelts and hides. Trading posts on Chokoloskee Island and at Everglades City became important gathering places for the few isolated settlers and Native Americans.

The first modern settlers followed William Thomas Collier, who started visiting what is now Marco Island in 1870. By the early 1900s, Collier County was a tourist destination known for its sunshine, great weather, and fun. Ranchers were grazing herds of scrub cattle on the open prairies around Immokalee. Railroads improved access in the 1920s and helped raise the County's beef cattle industry to national importance by the end of World War II.

The County's population centers took root in the 1920s when land tycoon Barron Gift Collier purchased over 1.3 million acres in Southwest Florida and convinced the state to create a county in his name. At the time the Collier County Commissioners held their first meeting in July 1923 in Everglades City, the County's population was less than 1,200. Barron Collier not only introduced paved roads, but also brought electric power, the telegraph and new businesses and homeowners to Florida's last frontier. The completion of the Tamiami Trail (the Tampa to Miami highway) in 1928 unlocked the region's enormous agricultural and resort potential.

World War II introduced hundreds of Army Air Force personnel to Naples and Collier County when the U.S. Army Air Field (now Naples Airport) was activated in 1943 to train combat pilots. Many veterans returned after the war as prospective home buyers and businessmen. Over the next sixty years, the number of County residents



swelled from 6,488 in 1950, to 85,000 in 1980 to 330,000 in 2010.

Today, Collier County has become one of the fastest developing and most dynamic areas in the nation. Much of the boom has been based on tourism and real estate but that is changing as the County is becoming a business center with a growing professional services sector in particular. Many business owners with second homes in the County are recognizing the high quality of life and relocating some or all of their operations to the area. As a result, the area has become recognized for its unique intellectual capital.

Commerce

Commerce in Collier County is multi-faceted and the primary engines are tourism, real estate development, retail, healthcare, financial services and agriculture. The economy is largely service driven and the County is seeking to expand and diversify its employment base. Edison State College, Hodges University, Florida Gulf Coast University and Ave Maria University are also assets and supporters of economic development. They provide a means for residents to develop the skills necessary to the success of local businesses. There is no income tax in the state of Florida or Collier County.

Demographics

While the County's population is approximately 330,000, it is part of Southwest Florida with a population of 1.2 million. Collier County's median resident age is 45.8. 26% of the community's members are under 20 years of age, 22% is between 20 and 45, 32% is between 45 and 64, and 25% is over 65. In terms of racial composition, 92% of the community is Caucasian, 7% is African American, and other groups constitute the remainder. Hispanics of all races comprise 26% of the total. 24% of the county's population was born outside the United States. While English is spoken at home by 70% of the residents, 23% speak Spanish, and 7% speak other, primarily Indo European, languages.

The estimated median annual family income in 2010 was \$68,560 with a mean family income of \$107,900.

By comparison, the median family income for the state of Florida is \$57,200 and the mean family income is \$77,000. Only 7.9% of the County's families were considered to be below poverty level. Educationally, 85% of those over 25 have a high school degree while 30.89% have a college or advanced degree.

The Government

The Board of County Commissioners (BCC) serves as the legislative branch and provides policy guidance and oversight to much of the government. It is comprised of five commissioners. Each represents a district and all are elected to four-year terms. Terms are staggered and elections are held in even numbered years in November. The State Constitution gives the BCC the power to adopt ordinances, approve the County budget and set millage rates, and establish the requirements for the departments under its control.

The BCC appoints a County Administrator to oversee the County's day-to-day operations. More importantly, the BCC genuinely wants what is best for the County, respects the administrator and lets the administrator do his job. The net total budget (that is, before internal transfers) for the County was \$886,243,200. The operating budget was \$692,724,500. These figures include a number of functions the County Manager does not oversee: namely, the Sheriff, Clerk of Circuit Court, Supervisor of Elections, Tax Collector and Property Appraiser. The County Manager oversees approximately 46% of the County's 3,300 employees. That largest number of employees supervised by others is in the Sheriff's Office (41% of the total).

As with much of Florida, the County total taxable property value peaked in FY 2008 at \$82,542,090,227 and declined to \$58,598,879,552 in FY2013. Needless to say, the reduction has placed a strain on the County's ability to fund services at previous levels.

The Office of Business and Economic Development

In June 2012, the Board of County Commissioners unanimously approved the creation of the Office of

Business and Economic Development reporting directly to the County Manager. Once hired, the Director will be able to hire a Business Development Coordinator, an Economic Research Analyst and an Administrative Assistant. The mission of this new office is to streamline the governmental economic development functions and promote a better business climate.

Primary goals include improvement of the local business environment, promotion of high wage jobs, support and facilitation of business attraction, retention, and expansion initiatives and collaboration with private and not for profit organizations seeking to grow and diversify our local economy. The new Director will be tasked with developing a better business plan with strategies and measurable outcomes.

Tactical goals include increasing Collier's competitiveness as a business-friendly location for capital, talent, innovation and entrepreneurship; and facilitating business development through delivery of world-class customer service. The new Director will be expected to achieve strategic alignment of the County's public services, create a seamless, customer-focused environment for business development support and develop business and community outreach programs. The individual will also play a role in terms of educating the citizens about the value of economic development to the community.

The Challenges

The key challenges are to bring additional business to Collier County and to diversify the employment base while retaining and helping existing businesses find ways to expand. To do so, the new Director will need to create an office from scratch. That will entail hiring staff, developing its business plan as well as policies and procedures, developing metrics to measure success, establishing relationships with County staff and attend to the necessary administrative details. At the same time, the individual will need

to establish a strong presence with extensive outreach to all elements of the community at large, and seek out and capture development opportunities. While it is anticipated that much of the first year will be spent establishing the economic development infrastructure and plans for going forward, it will also be important to show early successes. As part of his/her effort, the new Director will need to determine what the County can do better to attract and smooth the way for new businesses to establish themselves within the jurisdiction while ensuring that existing businesses flourish.

The Ideal Candidate

The County is looking for a dynamic, energetic individual with a passion for economic development. The Director should be a creative and innovative thinker, and be able to understand and articulate the many unique assets of Collier County and how they can be leveraged to achieve a highly successful and targeted economic development program. It should be realized that the community has traditionally not fully embraced the need for economic development. The individual will drive the economic development process while being sensitive to divergent views. She/he will be personable and likeable with outstanding people skills and speak the language of business. He/she will understand the importance of listening and understanding what people truly want and need. The individual will be a relationship and coalition builder, and be able to reach out to both constituents that understand and support economic development, and those that are skeptical of the role that the public sector should play in promoting economic development.

The Director will be a promoter and have the ability to sell the County as the great place it is to live, work and play. It is anticipated that the individual will partner with the private sector to promote the County. She/he will also understand what it takes to get a deal done and must have a demonstrated track record for bringing economic development to his/her jurisdiction. The individual will understand the importance of rules and procedures but also know how to cut through the red tape when necessary. She/he will also understand the



importance of home grown businesses and the need to not only retain them in the community but also help them grow. The new Director will have strong intergovernmental relations skills. The individual will represent Collier County and work collaboratively with local, regional, state and federal agencies. Some of these include the local chambers of commerce, the State Department of Economic Opportunity, Florida Economic Development Council, Regional Planning Council, Florida High Tech Corridor, and Workforce Board. The goal will be to build coalitions that promote economic development through shared data, marketing, and business attraction efforts.



Minimum qualifications include a Bachelor's degree in business, public administration, economics, marketing or a related field supplemented by six years of progressively responsible experience managing departments, marketing, public relations programs and operations or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job. Knowledge of Florida law is a plus. Fingerprinting is required.

Compensation

Salary between \$88,000 and \$122,000; hiring range expected between \$88,000 and \$110,000. The County offers a broad benefits package and participates in the Florida State Retirement System.

Residency

Residency inside the County is preferred.

Confidentiality

Under Florida's public records act, once an application is submitted, it is deemed a public record.



How to Apply

E-mail your resume to Recruit29@cb-asso.com by October 19, 2012. Faxed and mailed resumes will not be considered. Questions should be directed to Tom Andrews, Senior Vice President with Colin Baenziger & Associates at (770) 814-0455, or Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537.

The Process

Applications will be screened between mid-October and mid-November. Finalists are anticipated to interview in late November/early December.

Other Important Information

Collier County is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages women and minorities to apply. More information can be found at the county's website: <http://www.colliergov.net/>

COLIN BAENZIGER & ASSOCIATES
EXECUTIVE RECRUITING