

# Major Employment Center Study

July 12, 2007

- Project Overview
  - Vision & Goals
- County Trends
- Review of Best Practices
- Preliminary Recommendations
- Next Steps

# Project Overview



- Work to Date
  - Stakeholder Interviews
  - County Profile
  - Website Development/GIS Mapping
  - Issues and Opportunities
  - MEC core analysis
  - Scenario analysis of supply & demand for office and industrial space
  - Review session with County
  - Proposed Vision
  - Best Practices Review
  - Preliminary Recommendations
  - Web X Presentation with Technical Committee
  - Planning Commission Update

# Major Employment Centers

- Current MECs Goals
  - Major Employment Centers are planned or existing concentrations of industrial, manufacturing, wholesale, and office employment
  - Large enough to provide separation from surrounding land uses and internal site planning
  - On major transportation routes/accessible to workers
  - Often planned through DRIs

## Project Vision:

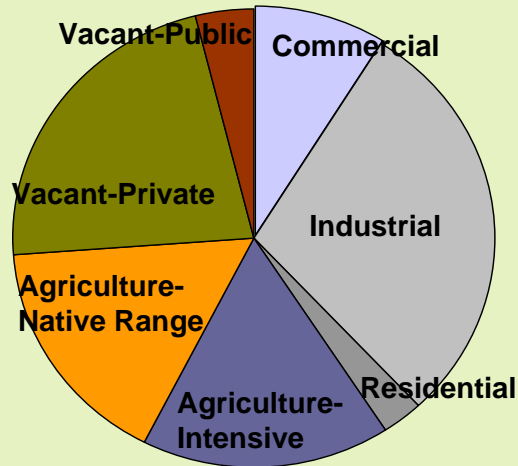
*A balanced land use pattern that promotes a diversity of employment, business, and economic growth throughout the county in such a way that protects the quality of life of Sarasota's residents and increases the sustainability of its activity patterns.*

# Project Goals

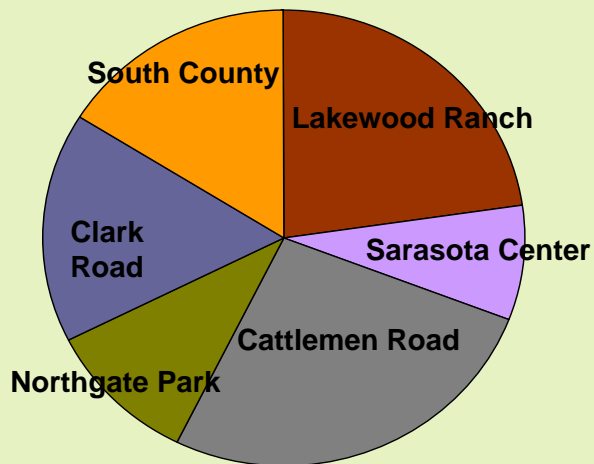
1. Promote the economic development goals of the county, including a diversified economic base
2. Provide adequate land for the retention and growth of the existing employers
3. Make the most efficient use of limited land within the urban service area
4. Increase the sustainability of land development patterns and reduce the strain on the roadway system, which is subject to limited funding
5. Seek new opportunities for incorporating workforce housing
6. Make the most efficient use of county funds for promoting economic development

# MEC Land Use Summary

**MEC Acreage - by Use**



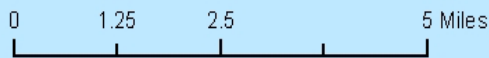
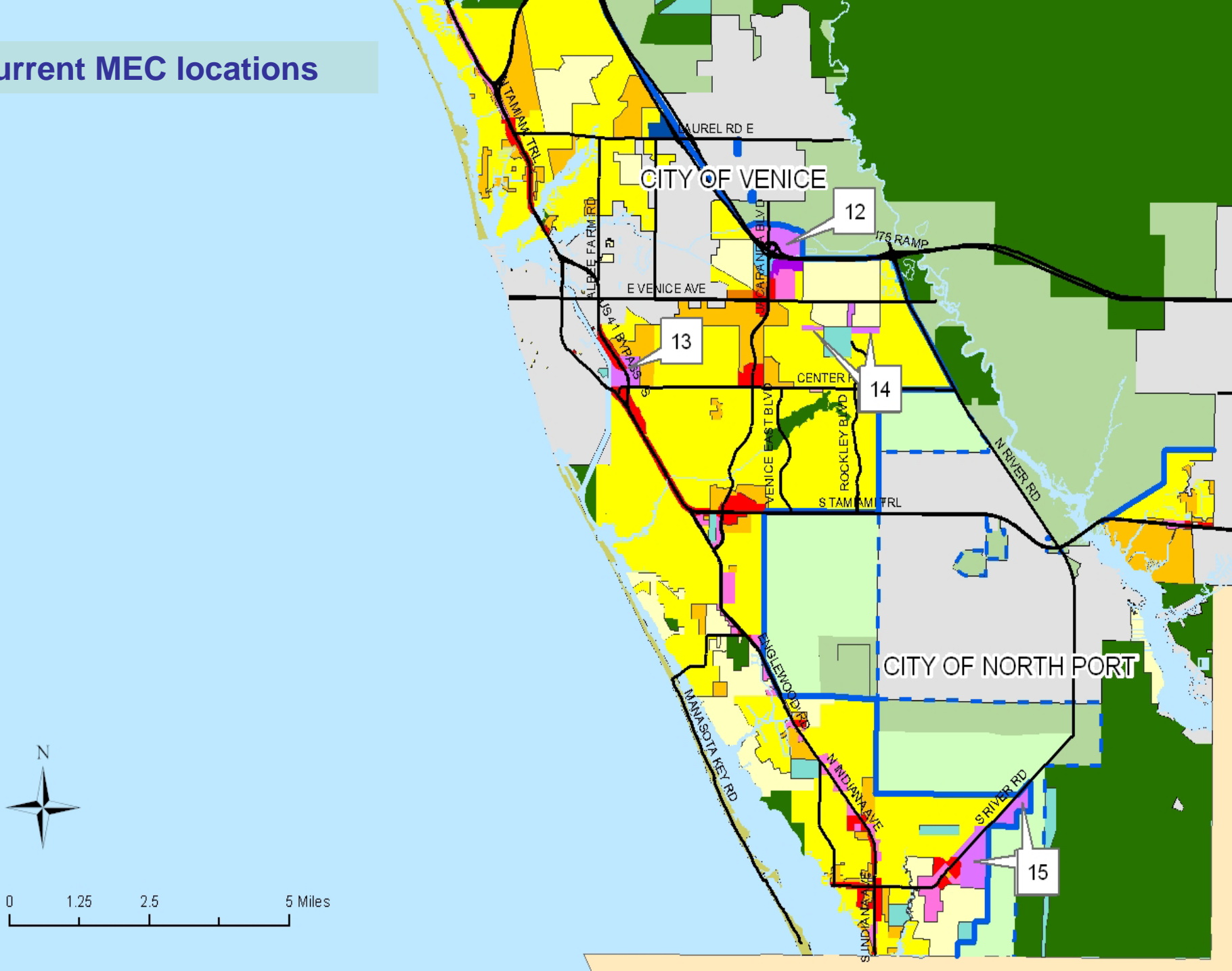
**MEC Acreage - by MEC Zone**



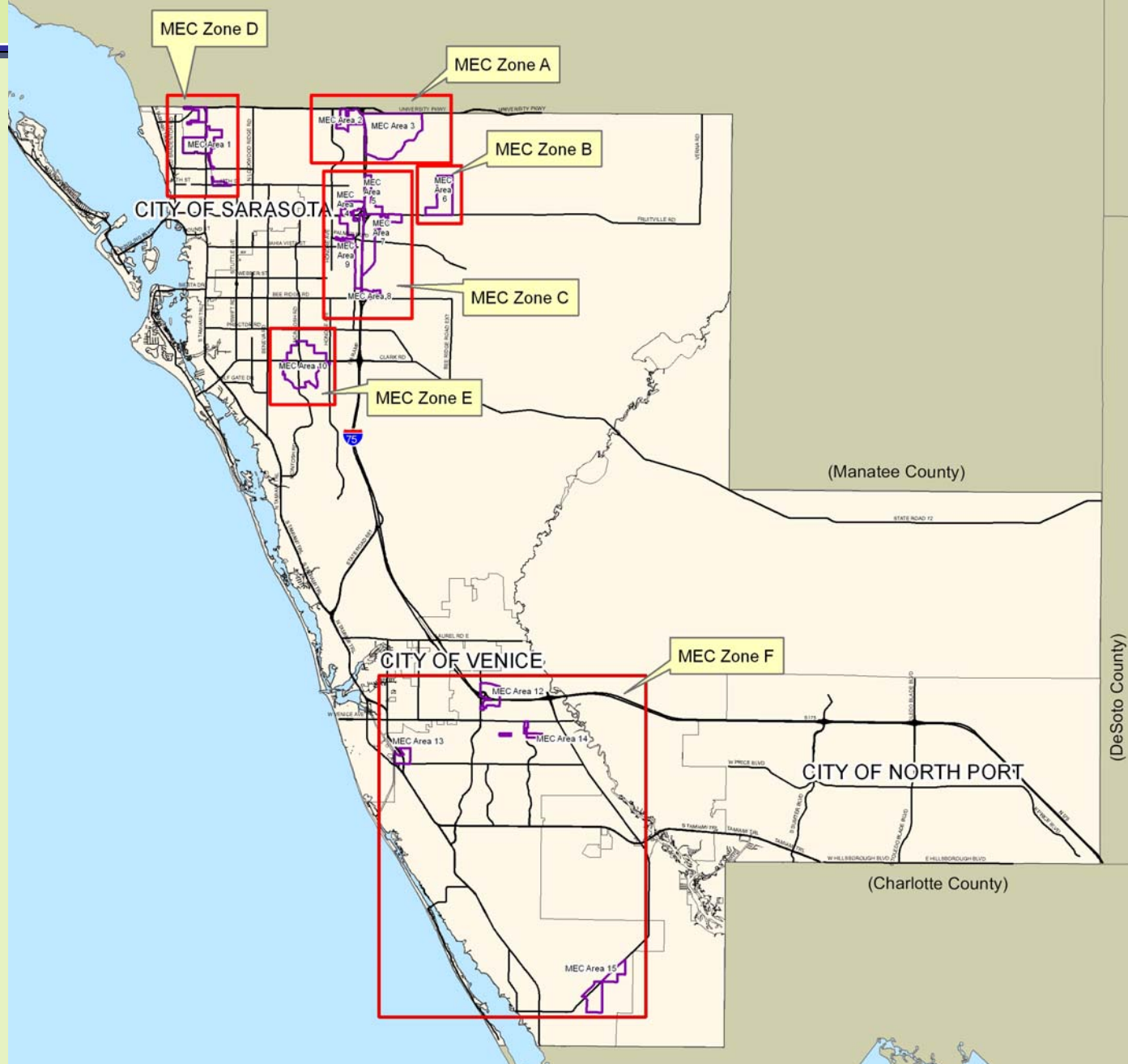
- 15 MECs across Sarasota County, with the highest concentration in North County
- MECs contain 6,300 gross acres
  - 4,400 *net* acres of usable land
  - 2,400 acres of vacant land



# Current MEC locations



# MEC Analysis Zones



- Scenario 1
  - Develop the available vacant land at current densities
    - Includes all non-public undeveloped land in the MECs (agricultural, native range, and vacant-private)
- Scenario 2
  - Develop vacant land at higher densities (average 30% FAR)
- Scenario 3
  - Redevelop appropriate parcels at higher densities (average 30% FAR)
- **Scenario 4**
  - **Develop vacant land at higher densities and redevelop appropriate parcels at higher densities**

## Sources for Best Practices:

1. Pinellas County, FL
2. King County, WA
3. Washington County, OR
4. City of San Diego, CA
5. City of Riverside, CA
6. Fairfax County, VA
7. Industrial Real Estate Development, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.

## Comprehensive Plan Policies – Economic Development

(Review indicates that the County is using the best approaches)

1. Promote retention and expansion of existing business and industry (All)
2. Promote a diversified economy (All)
3. Promote quality employment opportunities with high-paying wages (San Diego)
4. Give priority to enterprises that yield large numbers of skilled, high-paying jobs relative to site size (Riverside)

## Economic Development Policies

1. Avoid giving incentives for development of warehouse and distribution facilities, with low employment densities (Riverside)
2. Employ Industrial Development Bonds to purchase lands, buildings, and capital equipment for small manufacturers at lower interest rates (Riverside)
3. Provide job tax credits per qualifying employee for new and/or additional jobs (Pinellas)

## Industrial Preservation Policies

1. Offer business relocation assistance grants (New Jersey)
2. Provide technical assistance to utilize smaller footprints for production facilities (King)
3. Reduce costly requirements for paving, landscaping, building setbacks, and parking ratios (Industrial Real Estate)
4. Use local government development authority or nonprofit agency to prepare land (or acquire land) for industrial use. Purchase and reserve land in advance of market demand (Industrial Real Estate)
5. Sell or rent county-owned land for compatible industrial development (King)

## Comprehensive Plan Policies – Land Availability

1. Provide adequate land for industrial and other employment growth (All)
2. Make more efficient use of employment lands (San Diego)
3. Periodically inventory and monitor land use and supply (King)
4. Ensure that land is available in different parcel sizes and different locations (in-town and outlying) (Industrial Real Estate)
5. Plan for increasing reliance on redevelopment and infill as land becomes more scarce (Pinellas)

## Exclusive Industrial Districts

1. Strictly limit the intrusion of incompatible or dissimilar uses into industrial areas (All)
2. Strictly limit any redesignations or rezonings of land from industrial use (San Diego)
3. Avoid encroachment of incompatible land uses within close proximity to industrial land (San Diego)
4. Preserve large parcels for major industrial users (Washington)

## “Mixed Use Center” Policies

1. Create a hierarchy of mixed use centers with balanced distribution of workplace & multifamily, and retail square feet (King)
2. Promote the location of major employment within or adjacent to existing or planned mixed use centers
3. Encourage transit oriented development (TODs), with structured parking, public spaces, and amenities (King, Fairfax)
4. Create a series of distinct, balanced, relatively self-sufficient communities, therefore discouraging lengthy cross-county trips and reducing congestion (King)

## Floating District Policies

1. Allow developers to initiate the proposed development of new business parks (Washington)
2. Require unitary control, master planned, adequate size, adequate access (Washington)
3. Consider surrounding land uses and avoid land use conflicts (Washington)

## Infrastructure Provision Policies

1. Ensure that land available for business and industrial development is properly located and accounted for in facilities planning (Industrial Real Estate)
2. Provide street or road improvements to influence the location or retention of a firm (Oregon)
3. Extend high quality utility infrastructure to areas planned for industrial or employment land uses (Washington)

## Redevelopment and Infill Policies

1. Create greater regulatory flexibility for redevelopment projects (King)
2. Waive part or all of impact fees for redevelopment, which uses existing infrastructure and makes efficient use of land (King)
3. Use a public-sector authority to acquire, clear, and subdivide land for reuse (Industrial Real Estate)
4. Provide real estate tax credits to redeveloped lands offsetting the increment in increased value (Maryland)

# Preliminary Recommendations

## Policy Direction

Targeted MECs – tailored for specific functions

1. Exclusive Industrial Districts
2. Mixed Use Centers– Balanced Districts
3. Redevelopment & Redistribution
4. Maintain some current MECs ‘as is’

# Preliminary Recommendations

## Create Exclusive Industrial Districts

- Industrial land uses cannot compete with other land uses for price of land
- **Large parcels** are often needed for certain industrial functions
- The viability of industrial land degrades when it is encroached by sensitive land uses such as residential
- Establish **Prime Industrial designation** to increase barriers to non-industrial development in certain areas
- Prepare lands for industrial development through “Ready for Growth” relocation planning
- Establish infrastructure incentives for industrial development

# Preliminary Recommendations

## Require Balanced Mixed Use Centers

- Promote **mixed-use, transit-oriented, pedestrian-oriented** centers, which reduce roadway demand and increase sustainability
- Office employment, retail, housing, and institutional land uses can be compatible and developed in a pedestrian oriented framework using **form-based codes**
- Encourage **workforce housing** within walking distance of employment
- Develop **recommended ratios** of workplace, retail, and residential uses in Mixed-Use Centers
- Limit the retail in each Mixed-Use Center so that it serves the local community and not the entire region, also to encourage a **proper balance of land uses**

# Preliminary Recommendations

## Increase Densities of Existing MECs

- Current land is being used inefficiently – 6% FAR
- Use limited MEC land **more efficiently** – require higher density
- Encourage employment-intensive land uses (i.e. not warehousing and distribution)
- Work to mitigate development ceilings in **DRI agreements**
  - Mixed use development – better balance of land uses
  - Increase internal trip capture
  - Promote increase transit use / create minimum transit ridership share for new developments

# Preliminary Recommendations

## Redevelop Existing MECs

- Create a long term strategy to transition from a greenfield development to **redevelopment**
- Allow **greater density** & regulatory flexibility for redeveloped sites
- Create **detailed redevelopment plans** for key districts with special values, i.e. near the airport
- **Monitor** amount of redevelopment occurring as well as the amount of obsolete buildings
- Consider waiving specific impact fees associated with redevelopment
- Provide **public financing and/or tax credits** for demolition and land preparation associated with redevelopment

## Use Limited MEC Land More Efficiently

- Encourage **greater flexibility on height requirements/** stormwater requirements – shared facilities
- Decrease open space requirements for specific MECs – internal to site
- Require equal setbacks for the residential side as for the industrial side of adjacent land uses

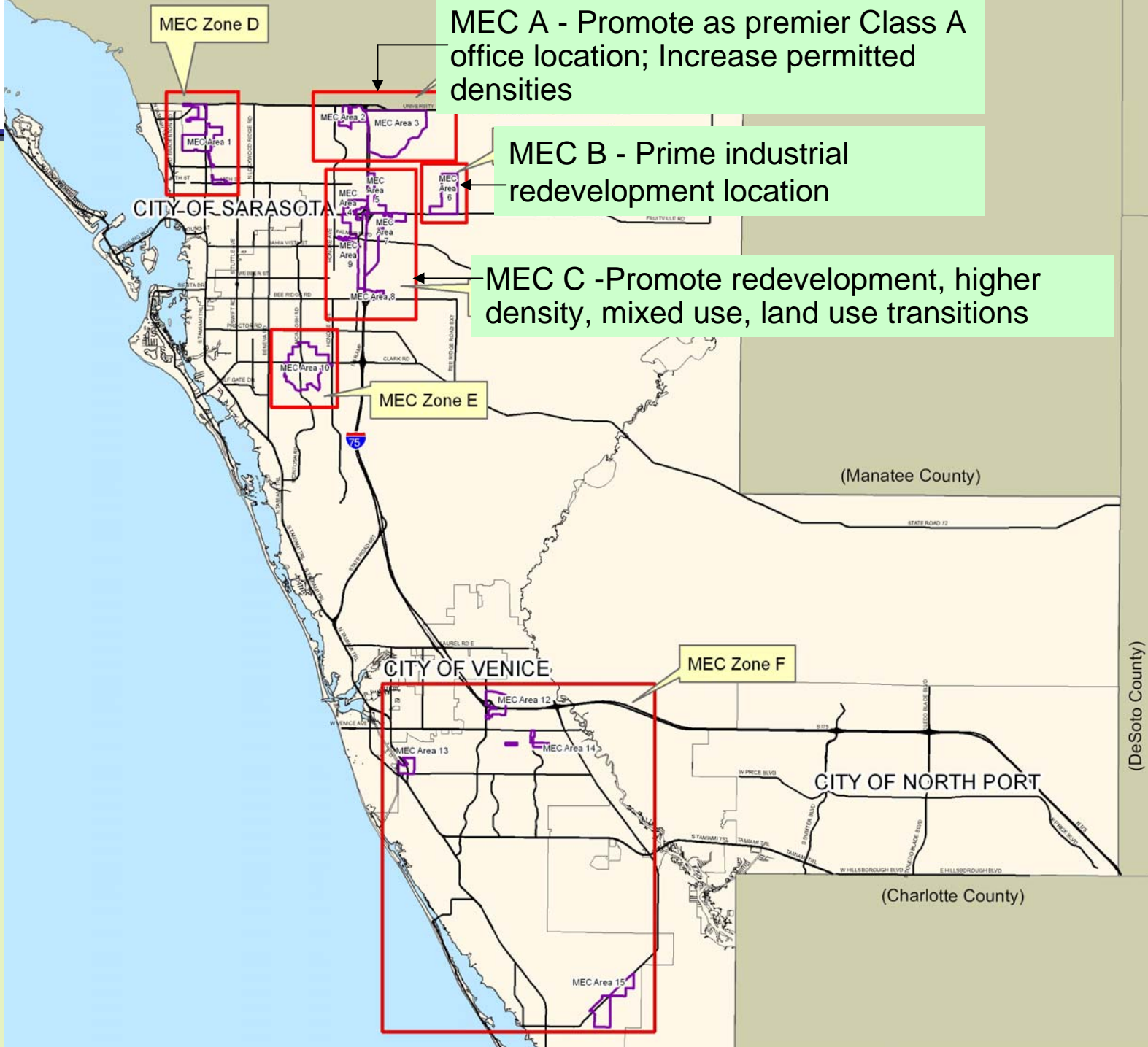
## Distribute Employment Centers throughout the County

- Create **new MECs in south county** in coordination with Venice and North Port
- Divide county into districts and seek to meet the daily needs of each community for employment, shopping, and public services
- Strive for jobs/housing balance in each community within the county
- Set aside adequate land for different types of employment in each geographic community

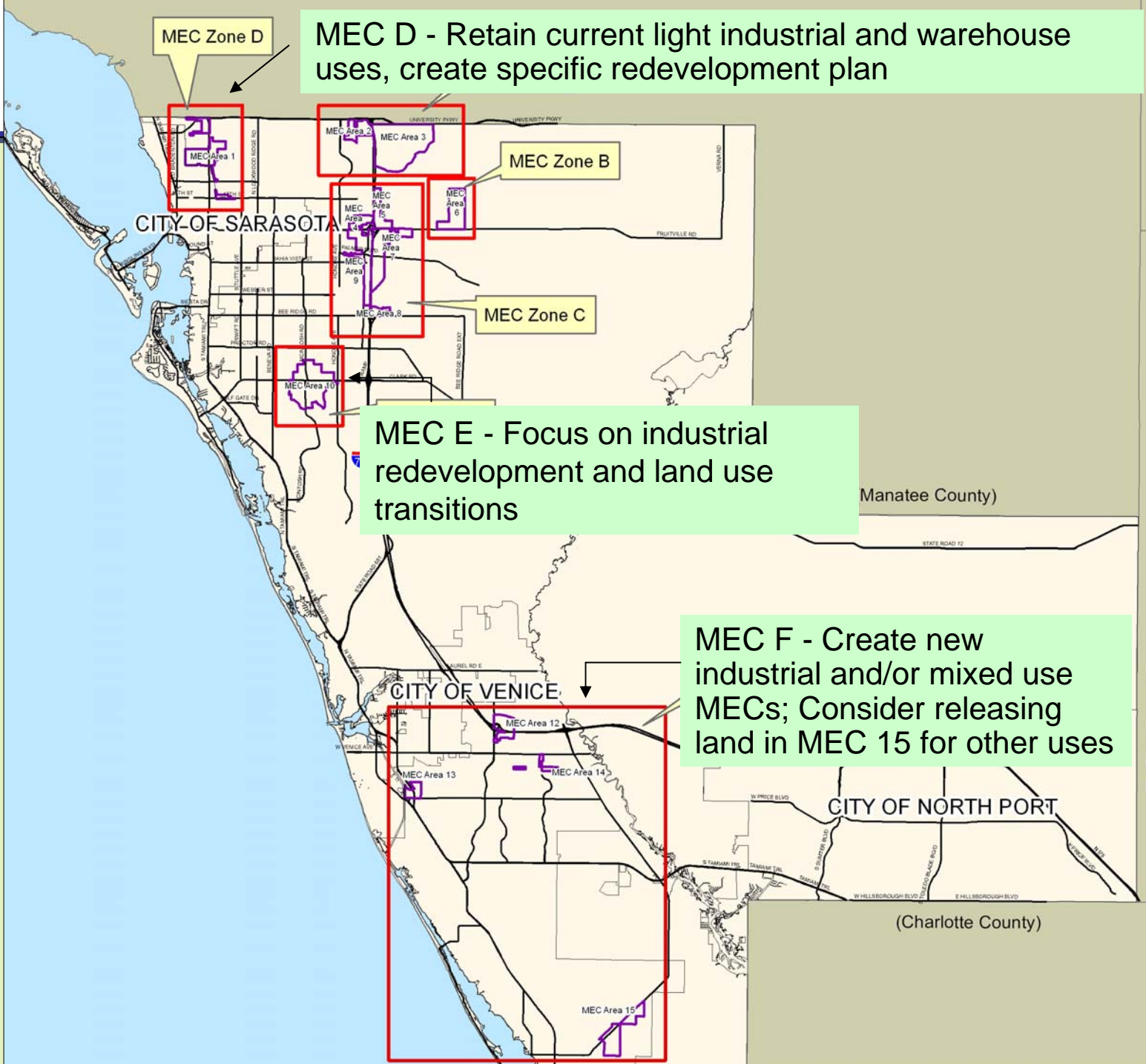
## Permit Floating Business Park Zoning

- Allow developer-initiated business parks in any location through an open and community-oriented development review process
- Unitary control, master planned business parks
- **Strict Criteria:**
  - Location along major transportation and transit routes
  - Possess adequate levels of infrastructure
  - Large parcels for coordinated development and buffering
  - Be in proximity to the labor pool (consider using jobs/housing balance criteria)
  - Land use compatibility with current land uses

# MECs



# MECs



MEC D - Retain current light industrial and warehouse uses, create specific redevelopment plan

MEC E - Focus on industrial redevelopment and land use transitions

MEC F - Create new industrial and/or mixed use MECs; Consider releasing land in MEC 15 for other uses

(DeSoto County)

## Preliminary Strategies

- MEC A – Promote as premier Class A office location; Allow increased density
- MEC B – Prime industrial redevelopment location
- MEC C – Promote redevelopment, higher density, mixed use, land use transitions
- MEC D – Retain current light industrial and warehouse uses, create specific redevelopment plan
- MEC E – Focus on industrial redevelopment and land use transitions
- MEC F – Create new industrial and/or mixed use MECs; Consider releasing land in MEC 15 for other uses

- Refine details on recommended policies
- Final presentation to Board of Commissioners
  - September 26, 2007
- Ongoing Website Updates
  - <http://scgov.net/MEC>

# Major Employment Center Study

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