

Welcome to Your Community Development District (CDD)

Understanding CDDs

- **What is a CDD?** A special purpose government entity created by a developer or landowner to plan, finance, and manage the infrastructure and services within your community. The CDD is not an extension of the City or County, it is its own separate entity.
- **CDD vs. HOA:** Unlike Homeowners Associations (HOAs) which focus on enforcing rules and maintaining property values, CDDs concentrate on large-scale infrastructure and community-wide services.

Governance and Operations

- **Resident Role in Governance:** As a resident, your part of a community governed by a Board of Supervisors, elected by you and your neighbors, making key decisions on policies, budgets, and projects. Regularly occurring Board of Supervisor meetings include time for resident participation to discuss agenda items and make recommendations to the Board.
- **Daily Management & Staff:** The CDD handles everyday operations in the District like contracting services, project oversight, and fostering community engagement. In addition to the Board of Supervisors, the District contracts with vendors for regular recurring services including but not limited to District Management, Legal, Accounting, Engineering, Landscaping and Aquatic Services.

Infrastructure Maintenance

- **Ownership Map** – The community ownership map attached herein shows CDD, POA & County owned infrastructure in the Preserve at South Branch District Boundaries.
- **Stormwater Ponds** – This includes all structures such as control structures, pipes, grates, inlets, mitered ends, and all structures associated with the functionality of the stormwater system. The stormwater ponds are regulated by the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). The District has two Environmental Resource Permits with SWFWMD that require inspection and recertification of all ponds every 60 months. The community employs an aquatic services professional to maintain the water quality and vegetation in the ponds and employs an engineering services to inspect and recertify the pond permits.
- **Landscaping & Irrigation** – There are spaces of CDD owned tracts throughout the community with landscape improvements and turf to be maintained, along with the necessary irrigation in these areas. The community contracts with landscape and irrigation professionals for regular services to maintain these areas.
- **Roadways** – Apart from South Branch Blvd, the District owns and maintains the roadways throughout the community.
- **Perimeter Fencing** – The District owns and maintains areas of perimeter fencing within the community.
- **Wetland Mitigation** – There are large areas of wetland conservation within the District bounds. Wetland mitigation areas are regulated and there are maintenance and reporting requirements of the District that may include removal of invasive plant species, plantings of beneficial plant

species and chemical treatments. The District employs vendors to maintain the mitigation areas and to report back to the regulatory bodies.

Assessments & Financing

- Assessments in CDDs function as a means to finance and manage the infrastructure and services within a community, ensuring its development and maintenance.
- CDDs have the authority to plan, finance, construct, operate, and maintain a wide array of community-wide infrastructure and services. The funding for these projects and services primarily comes from self-imposed fees and assessments levied on the property owners within the district. These assessments are included in the annual property tax bill and may consist of two parts: an annual assessment for operations and maintenance, which can fluctuate each year, and an annual capital assessment for repaying bonds issued by the CDD to finance community infrastructure, which is generally fixed for the term of the bonds.
- Since CDDs operate under the same regulations as other government entities, they can borrow money at lower, tax-exempt interest rates, similar to cities and counties.
- The annual operation and maintenance portion of the CDD assessment to residents is perpetual, the debt service assessment for bonds has a fixed payoff date, and in most instances, can be paid off in advance if desired.

Structure, Elections & Turnover

- **Board of Supervisors:** 5 members of the community make up the Board of Supervisors. There is a Chairman, Vice Chairman, and 3 Assistant Secretaries. Resident Supervisors are either appointed or voted in by the community.
- **Elections:** At the start of the CDD, Landowner Elections are held, and votes are calculated by the number of total acreage owned. After 6 years and depending on the District size, residents begin to be elected to the Board until eventually the Board is turned over to full Resident representation. Board members are elected for staggered 4-year terms with elections for different seats available every 2 years. Elections are held the first Tuesday in November on even numbered years.
- **Sunshine Law:** The Sunshine Law mandates that meetings and records of the District be open and accessible to the public. This law is designed to ensure transparency, allowing residents and other interested parties to be informed about and participate in the decision-making processes of their local CDDs. Meetings must be noticed properly, held in public spaces, and minutes must be recorded, ensuring that the operations and decisions of the CDDs are conducted in an open manner. This is part of Florida's broader commitment to public access and government transparency, encompassing not just CDDs but all levels of government entities within the state. The Sunshine Law also restricts the ability for Board of Supervisors to discuss District affairs outside of a scheduled Board of Supervisors meeting.