

# City of Clearwater Economic Development Strategic Plan

## Implementation Plan Update

February 2016

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	TIMEFRAME						FY14-15 ACCOMPLISHMENTS & ADDITIONAL NOTES
		Ongoing	Complete	In Progress	Future			
					1-3 yrs	4-7 yrs	6 - 10 yrs	
<b>GOAL 1: LAND USE</b>								
<i>Encourage the development of sites and buildings needed to accommodate higher intensity employment opportunities.</i>								
<b>STRATEGY 1.1: Establish an employment center overlay district to encourage higher-wage employment in strategic locations.</b>								
Action 1: Establish a new overlay district to encourage new Class A office developments along US-19.	City of Clearwater			✓				US19 Corridor Redevelopment Plan is complete and was adopted in Dec 2012. Rather than an overlay district, created new zoning district. Plan calls for increased intensity and density throughout the corridor, with the most intense development in Regional Centers. LRP is working with consultant to develop a new zoning district and development standards, set to be completed in FY 15-16.
Action 2: Consider applying the employment center overlay to the areas between Gulf to Bay and Drew Street appropriate for higher intensity commercial office development.	City of Clearwater		✓					
Action 3: The overlay district may also be utilized to encourage commercial office development on sites currently occupied by strip center retail, RV parks, and mobile homes parks.	City of Clearwater		✓	✓				
Action 4: The city could collaborate with neighboring jurisdictions on the preparation of a US 19 corridor study.	City of Clearwater		✓					

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<b>STRATEGY 1.2: Create a technology district to encourage building improvements in Downtown, the Cleveland Street District, and the East Gateway.</b>								
Action 1: Create a technology infrastructure grant program.	City of Clearwater		✓					IT Infrastructure Study completed in Aug 2012. Assessment indicated needed infrastructure improvements generally limited and within buildings. ED&H staff works with property owners on an as-needed basis to address specific issues.
Action 2: Support the development and attraction of software firms to Clearwater.	City of Clearwater, Pinellas County ED	✓						Ongoing, ED&H staff works with businesses as well as local and regional partners to encourage development, attraction and growth of IT/Software firms in Clearwater. With public and private partners, developed of comprehensive ecosystem (aka Clearwater Business SPARK) to further support these efforts. (see Strategy 4.1)
Action 3: Assist in organizing a local software council.	City of Clearwater, Clearwater Regional Chamber of Commerce, existing software firms		✓					Tech Council was formed in 2012 (7 members) and expanded in 2013. Clearwater Technology Alliance, LLC (CTA) was formed by members of the Tech Council in 2014. CTA has since become inactive with founding members of Tech Council/CTA investing in TAFFIE (Tech business incubator located within iDatix building).(See also Strategy 4.1).

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<b>STRATEGY 1.3: Create a medical overlay district to encourage new healthcare sector development and employment in the area surrounding Morton Plant Hospital.</b>								
Action 1: Establish a medical overlay district in the neighborhoods surrounding the Morton Plant Hospital.	City of Clearwater				✓			Medical District identified. No LRP efforts underway at this time. Competing priorities (City) and changes resulting from federal healthcare laws make it unclear at this time the direction of the industry.
Action 2: Promote and expand the Clearwater's growing healthcare sector.	City of Clearwater, Pinellas County ED	✓			✓			BRE activities and promotion ongoing. Pinellas County Economic Development (PCED) supports regional healthcare recruitment and retention efforts. Information detailing industry data and opportunities are readily available for site selectors and others on PCED web site. Additional focus is to be applied following LRP efforts. (see above)
Action 3: Target companies included in SRI's Applied Medicine & Human Performance target industry cluster.	City of Clearwater, Pinellas County ED, Tampa Bay Partnership (TBP)	✓	✓					Incorporated in our BRE program as well as regional activities. Assisted with TBP's "Asset Map" to identify healthcare-related assets in Clearwater.

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<b>STRATEGY 1.4: Expand the use of the Industrial, Research and Technology District (IRT).</b>								
Action 1: Investigate the long-term feasibility of converting Clearwater Executive Golf Course to an Industrial, Research and Technology District.	City of Clearwater				✓			There is a mix of parcels in City and Pinellas County jurisdiction. In 2016/17 there will be a joint planning effort with the City and Pinellas County to study the Hercules/Belcher/Keene Rd industrial area which may include the conversion of the Executive Golf Course. This area also to be identified as Target Employment Center in updated Countywide Rules (FY15-16) which will provide an intensity bonus of 100% for Manufacturing, Office and Research/Development Uses.  ED&H works with LRP to protect existing sites and identify additional sites for potential IRT uses.
Action 2: Investigate the feasibility of combining adjacent city-owned parcels and facilities in the industrial park into a single site capable of accommodating a major industrial expansion or relocation.	City of Clearwater				✓			
Action 3: Evaluate other non-industrial sites in the city appropriate for converting existing zoning to IRT.	City of Clearwater	✓						
Action 4: Protect existing industrial land in the city from converting to other uses.	City of Clearwater	✓						
Action 5: Consider providing incentives to property owners or businesses to assist in rehabilitating/updating old facilities.	City of Clearwater	✓						

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<b>STRATEGY 1.5: Evaluate the city's development review and approval process to make the procedures and requirements more business friendly.</b>								
Action 1: Work with representatives of the local business and development community to gather input on the development review process.	City of Clearwater		✓					Business Task Force (BTF) was created by Council in 2011 and was comprised of business and development community leaders. Recommendations made; many code amendments made & implemented. (see below)
Action 2: Have Planning Department personnel internally review development review procedures and requirements to identify areas where the process can be improved.	City of Clearwater		✓					Conducted in 2011 & 2012 as part of the BTF initiative.
Action 3: Identify regional benchmarks to assess areas where permitting process can be improved.	City of Clearwater		✓					Conducted in 2011 & 2012 as part of the BTF initiative.
Action 4: Consider adopting a fast-track permitting process as an economic development incentive.	City of Clearwater				✓			Will be considered at future date.
Action 5: Revise the city's development code to include acceptable recommendations for improving the development review and approval process.	City of Clearwater		✓					With BTF input and assistance, code amendments made to improve site plan review and approval process. As an example, whereas previous requirement may have been Level II review (Community Development Board), now may be Level I review (DRC), thereby reducing time and expense of process.

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<b>GOAL 2: INVESTMENT CLIMATE</b>								
<i>Develop the policies and tools to compete for new private investment and jobs.</i>								
<b>STRATEGY 2.1: Adopt a formal incentives policy.</b>								
Action 1: Determine incentives to be offered. Consideration should be given to a broad range of both financial and non-financial incentives which are available to the city.	City of Clearwater			✓				Competing priorities pushed the development of this policy into FY15-16.
Action 2: Determine thresholds that will trigger incentives and recapture provisions.	City of Clearwater			✓				
Action 3: Once a policy is in place, actively promote the availability of incentives.	City of Clearwater				✓			Promotion will be incorporated into various web and print media platforms.
<b>STRATEGY 2.2: Use incentives and other tools to encourage desired development.</b>								
Action 1: Streamline existing development review and approval processes for those projects that achieve infill and redevelopment goals.	City of Clearwater		✓		✓			Business Task Force and P&D worked together to streamline processes. This may be further reviewed in conjunction with other upcoming initiatives.
Action 2: Identify and promote other incentives and tools, such as PACE Bonds, that could facilitate development in desired areas.	City of Clearwater			✓				PACE program evaluation part of FY15-16 work program.
Action 3: Work with local lenders to ensure that adequate financing options are available to support infill and redevelopment projects.	City of Clearwater	✓						As part of BRE program, staff works with regional bankers.
Action 4: Explore options such as sale-leaseback arrangements for public participation in selected infill or redevelopment projects.	City of Clearwater	✓						Options are explored on a project-by-project basis including sale-leaseback.

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<b>GOAL 3: BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION</b>								
<i>Create an environment that promotes the prosperity and growth of existing businesses.</i>								
<b>STRATEGY 3.1: Build and maintain a database of existing businesses in Clearwater.</b>								
Action 1: Maintain an inventory of the types of businesses already in the community, as well as new locations and expansions.	City of Clearwater, Pinellas County ED, Clearwater Regional Chamber	✓						In FY13-14, developed Salesforce.com customer relationship management (CRM) database to capture, track/manage Account/Contact information including leads, opportunities, projects. In FY14-15, ED&H began using Salesforce to capture information that is measurable, necessary for historical purposes, or may be used for marketing purposes. Integration of email, ability to attach and share documents amongst users, and a chatter feature will reduce redundancies and increase efficiencies. In FY15-16, ED&H will begin to use Salesforce contacts to distribute newsletters.
Action 2: Install and utilize a customer relationship management (CRM) software system for maintaining the business inventory and managing the city's relationships with local businesses.	City of Clearwater, Pinellas County ED, other cities	✓						
Action 3: Administer a regularly scheduled employer survey.	City of Clearwater, Pinellas County ED				✓			Database development of contacts in Salesforce in FY14-15 and competing priorities moved this to FY15-16 work program.
Action 4: Produce an annual report of BRE activities and employer survey results.	City of Clearwater		✓		✓			A 2013 Year in Review report was published providing an overview of BRE activities. Future report(s) will include survey results. (see above).

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<b>STRATEGY 3.2: Refine the Clearwater business visitation program.</b>								
Action 1: Evaluate the existing business visitation program and make necessary changes to optimize the process.	City of Clearwater	✓	✓					Conducted 362 business visits (100% of plan); documented additional 259 BRE client activities. As part of BRE program, ED Coordinators provided up-to-date information including workforce recruitment, training, and training grant opportunities; business improvement programs; foreign trade and export assistance programs; and various local, state, and federal incentive programs available for qualifying businesses. Referrals to partner organizations are inherent to the BRE program.
Action 2: Support SRI International's 2010 recommendation to initiate a coordinated region-wide BRE outreach and assistance program.	City of Clearwater, Pinellas County ED, other cities	✓	✓					
Action 3: Create regular business forum.	City of Clearwater, Pinellas County ED, Clearwater Regional Chamber	✓		✓				
<b>STRATEGY 3.3: Increase staffing for BRE activities.</b>								
Action 1: The city should commit resources to hiring one full-time staff person to contribute to Clearwater's business retention and expansion activities.	City of Clearwater	✓						ED&H completed hire of 2nd ED Coordinator in July 2013. Additional ED Coordinator position added in FY15-16.

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<b>GOAL 4: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT</b>								
<i>Support an entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem and collaborate with regional partners to market Clearwater to target industries.</i>								
<b>STRATEGY 4.1: Encourage innovation among existing businesses locally and regionally.</b>								
Action 1: Encourage local companies to work with the SBDCs at Pinellas County and the University of South Florida – St. Petersburg to pursue federal grants to support innovation.	City of Clearwater, Pinellas County SBDC, USF	✓		✓				As part of BRE program, staff makes appropriate referrals for SBIR/STTR grant applications. ED&H Staff and Library System Staff also works to support local programs, service providers and facilities offering incubator, co-worker, makerspaces, and business development services & training where programs can be delivered to an appropriate audience. ED&H is coordinating and facilitating development of entrepreneurship ecosystem known as Clearwater Business SPARK and is actively involved as a committee member in the Chamber's business development program.
Action 2: Assist companies in identifying other sources of technical assistance, such as the Florida Manufacturing Extension Partnership.	City of Clearwater, Pinellas County SBDC, USF	✓		✓				
Action 3: Support SRI's recommendation to build a regional innovation entrepreneurship ecosystem and actively participate in working group efforts.	City of Clearwater, Pinellas County SBDC, USF			✓				
Action 4: Become an affiliate member of the Tampa Bay Technology Forum (TBIF).	City of Clearwater				✓			
<b>STRATEGY 4.2: Promote entrepreneurship and small business development.</b>								
Action 1: Consider incentives targeted toward entrepreneurs and start-ups in order to support new business development and growth in Clearwater.	City of Clearwater			✓				FY15-16 work program. (See also Strategy 4.1, above)
Action 2: Create a strategic marketing plan for publicizing entrepreneurship assets available in Pinellas County and the region.	City of Clearwater, Pinellas County, USF, SCORE Clearwater, area chambers, and other business assistance partners			✓				Council approved budget for Clearwater Business SPARK in August 2015 for FY15-16 activities including marketing, advertisement, promotional items, collateral materials and website development. ED&H and Library System does/will work closely with SPARK partners to develop these components.

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<b>STRATEGY 4.3: Market Clearwater to local and regional businesses in target industries.</b>								
Action 1: Support and participate in regional economic development marketing activities.	City of Clearwater	✓						Staff and strategic direction changes at Tampa Bay Partnership (TBP) in FY14-15 limited our opportunities to be directly involved. In FY15-16, ED&H and City management will work with TBP to support legislative priorities. ED&H also is engaged on a continuing basis with our Pinellas County ED partners to market the community.
Action 2: Build awareness among decision-makers in additional target industries recommended by TIP (Software, Professional Services, Finance & Insurance).	City of Clearwater	✓						Through use of social media tools such as LinkedIn, directly reaching out to target industries to join group. As part of BRE program, ED Coordinators seek opportunities to engage with businesses in these target industries.
Action 3: Build awareness among corporate site selectors.	City of Clearwater	✓						Developed 2 Florida Trend ads (September and October 2015 issues). Developed real estate marketing piece highlighting 6 available key properties suitable for development in CRA (ULI-P); direct mailed 265 copies to site selectors, realtors, and developers; issued press release & TBP guest blog post regarding the same. Targeted site selectors to join LinkedIn ED group.
Action 4: Establish a prospect management system.	City of Clearwater		✓					Accomplished through use of Salesforce.com. (see 3.1, above)
Action 5: Pursue new investment from companies in the region seeking to consolidate facilities to the area.	City of Clearwater	✓						BRE program and partnerships with TBP and PCED.

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<b>STRATEGY 4.4: Raise Clearwater's profile regionally and nationally.</b>								
Action 1: Leverage tourism marketing for talent attraction, entrepreneurship, and economic development.	City of Clearwater, CVB, Clearwater Chambers				✓			Paid advertorial (" <i>From Surf to Success</i> "), co-sponsored by Clearwater Regional Chamber and Visit St Pete/Clearwater, appeared in FL Trend (April 2014); incorporated business and tourism data into full-page ads appearing in FL Trend (2 issues).
Action 2: Establish an aggressive conference and convention strategy linked to target sector opportunities.	City of Clearwater, CVB, Clearwater Chambers, local hotels					✓		Some discussions have occurred. Competing priorities have inhibited forward movement.
Action 3: Influence the image of Clearwater portrayed on the Web and through social media.	City of Clearwater, CVB, Clearwater Chambers	✓		✓				Accomplished primarily through Tourism contract ( <i>Imagine Communications</i> ). FY14-15 results: "Love Your Selfie" social media promo resulted in doubling our Instagram followers; 14 press releases; >400 targeted media pitches; developed 6 new destination videos; YouTube Video promo resulted in >24,000 views; >5M in advertising value; >10,000 Twitter followers; 457,580 unique visitors to tourism website a 45% increase. Beach visitors are up 10% (Y:Y); economic impact up 10% (Y:Y); new tourism videos were created and YouTube ads were purchased to enhance visibility of those ads. In addition, ED division's LinkedIn group increased membership by 113% to approximately 4,475 members. <i>Vision Internet</i> contracted to re-do the entire city website to make it more appealing and easier to navigate. The city completed the majority of the branding research and roll out in FY15-16 is incorporating the look, feel and verbiage into all web & social media platforms.

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<b>GOAL 5: TALENT AND PLACE</b>								
<i>Improve the existing amenities in Clearwater and continue to invest in city's infrastructure and people.</i>								
<b>STRATEGY 5.1: Maintain and expand the city's transportation infrastructure.</b>								
Action 1: Continue planning and investing in local road infrastructure, especially east-west thoroughfares.	City of Clearwater, Pinellas County, MPO	✓			✓			Ongoing as part of City annual contracts. FY15-16: SR60 work between Missouri & Osceola, between Court & Chestnut (railroad replacment); FY16-17: Resurfacing, rehabilitation, repair from Park Place to Highland to include west-bound right turn lane at intersection of Gulf to Bay & Belcher. Improvments will also include bike lanes.
Action 2: Advocate for long-term development of a regional light rail system with a stop in Clearwater and include transit-oriented development opportunities in all planning efforts.	City of Clearwater, regional allies	✓	✓					Though county-wide referendum for light rail failed in Nov 2014, city is working with PSTA & Jolley Trolley to expand routes, increase hours of operation and make available bus rapid transit.
Action 3: Support expanded commercial air service at Tampa International Airport (TIA).	City of Clearwater, regional allies	✓						Copa Airlines, Alaska Airlines, Edelweiss Air, and Lufthansa now offer new/expanded service to national/international business hubs. Major (\$1.2 B) expansion of TIA underway (new terminal, new car rental with people mover, new restaurants/vendors). Additionally, St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport has expanded service with new routes by Allegiant Air offer commercial service to numerous mid- and large-size business markets.
Action 4: Evaluate the need for additional city-owned maritime facilities to support commercial development, tourism, and visitor attraction.	City of Clearwater	✓			✓			Part of Comprehensive Boating Plan to be completed in FY15-16.

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<b>STRATEGY 5.2: Continue enhancing public amenities and aesthetics.</b>								
Action 1: Continue city-wide beautification efforts, such as improvements made along Cleveland Street and Gulf to Bay Boulevard.	City of Clearwater	✓						East Gateway Code Sweep conducted in April 2015. P&R continues to maintain streets and landscaping; Placed entry monument at Courtney Campbell Causeway entrance to the city. Streetscape Phase III is scheduled to begin in FY16-17 (Penny for Pinellas III).
Action 2: Maintain and enhance city parks and recreational facilities.	City of Clearwater	✓						Jack Russell Stadium currently under design. Design of Crest Lake Park moving forward in FY15-16. In FY-16: Will complete Comprehensive Boating Plan (ULI-P) and efforts related to future enhancements of Coachman Park to begin with selection of Master Plan Consultant (ULI-P).
Action 3: Work with private developers and building owners to promote visually appealing construction and landscaping that is consistent with city standards.	City of Clearwater, development community	✓						Part of P&D's development review & permitting process. Revisions to Downtown Design Guidelines will be moving forward in FY15-16 with estimated completion FY16-17.
Action 4: Explore opportunities to develop new professional and recreational sports facilities.	City of Clearwater, sports organizations	✓						P&R secured commitment from Philadelphia Union for Spring Training of this Major League Soccer (MLS) team. Continuing to recruit MLS spring training organizations until at least 2 committed.
Action 5: Continue enhancing the city's public harbor marinas.	City of Clearwater	✓						Clearwater Ferry Service (private enterprise) began operations and will be expanding routes; N. Marina Master Plan underway and will be completed in FY15-16; Issued RFP for Marina location of Crabby Bill's restaurant (city-owned site) & entered new lease agreement with Crabby Bill's. Per lease requirements, existing will be torn down and new built with proposed completion in February 2017.

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<b>STRATEGY 5.3: Support regional partners in workforce development, attraction, and retention efforts.</b>								
Action 1: Encourage private-sector involvement in education and workforce.	Education & business community	✓						Promoted school partnerships; Solicited businesses to participate in FL-TRADE committee/program at SPC; Promoted internship programs, grants and opportunities available to businesses.
Action 2: Leverage St. Petersburg College (SPC).	Education & business community	✓						Referrals for all types of training and education made regularly as part of BRE program. Staff meets with SPC several times a year to stay informed of programs and opportunities.
Action 3: Market the value of higher education to residents.	Education & business community	✓						Primarily accomplished through education community (K-12, post-secondary). ED&H staff, CareerSource Pinellas and other stakeholders continuously advocate for and promote education and training opportunities which support skills development for new and incumbent workers.
<b>STRATEGY 5.4: Create opportunities for leadership training, professional development, and networking.</b>								
Action 1: Support the Young Professionals Association.	City of Clearwater, Clearwater Chamber	✓						Clearwater Young Professionals (CYP) operates as part of Clearwater Regional Chamber. ED&H supports/promotes activities of CYP on a regular basis.
Action 2: Create opportunities for young professionals to network with industry leaders in Clearwater area businesses.	City of Clearwater, Clearwater Regional Chamber	✓						In addition to Chamber marketing of CYP events and meetings, partners and service providers of Clearwater Business SPARK offer speaker series events, entrepreneur's roundtable meetings, and other meetups.
Action 3: Promote internship and apprenticeship programs for college students.	Education & Business Community, SPC, City of Clearwater, Clearwater Regional Chamber	✓	✓					Worked with joint TBP/CareerSource subcommittee to develop portal for educators, employers and interns to come together for internship opportunities. Apprenticeship opportunities are developing in the region.