

Clearwater Community Vision Workshops

Early in 2005, the Clearwater City Council and senior staff held a series of three workshops devoted to exploring and refining their vision for the future of the City. During these workshops, they modified the official city vision statement, and came up with a series of strategic initiatives, based on this statement and their internal discussions, that could be used to help achieve desired future conditions.

The leaders recognized that past initiatives had not fared well, in part because of the perceived disconnect between their goals and the goals of the community as a whole. In order to mitigate this issue, the Council authorized a series of community-wide workshops, modeled after the ones that they and the staff had completed. These workshops had several primary purposes: gather information from the community about concerns and directions; field test the Council's ideas and proposed initiatives; help build consensus for which direction the City should move in the upcoming years.

This report summarizes the results of these community workshops. Eight weekly workshops were scheduled within the City and were held during the months of September and October. These workshops were held on weekday evenings, in locations spread throughout the community. Most workshops were very well attended, with the exception of workshop number five. In early November a ninth workshop was added in order to provide additional opportunities for business interests to attend and participate. City council members and senior staff attended every workshop, and most workshops included at least four Council members.

Each workshop was two hours in length; all followed the same format:

6:00 – 6:05	Welcome (Mayor Frank Hibbard)
6:05 – 6:25	Introduction to Community Visioning (HDR)
6:25 – 7:05	SWOT Analysis (group)
7:05 – 7:15	Informal Group Reports
7:15 – 7:35	Review Vision Statement & Initiatives (group)
7:35 – 7:55	Craft a Group Vision Statement (group)
7:55 – 8:00	Wrap Up

Attendees at each meeting sat at tables, in groups that typically ranged from four to eight people. Each table included a printed plan of the City showing all of the streets and roads. At the outset of the meeting, attendees were asked to indicate where they lived in Clearwater and where they worked in Clearwater, by placing colored stars on these locations. On those occasions where they participated in meetings, young people were asked to indicate the location of their schools, using the stars color coded for workplaces.

These same base maps were also used by the attendees to locate physical aspects of the City that could be considered as Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities or Threats. For all of the meetings, these were color coded as follows:

Strengths	Green
Weaknesses	Red
Opportunities	Yellow
Threats	Blue

After the last visioning session was completed, the results from all the maps were combined into composite maps indicating where attendees lived and worked (or went to school), as well as the geographic nature of perceived Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. These composite maps are included in this final report.

