

Community Vision Statements

As a wrap-up to each of the visioning workshops, attendees were asked to develop their own vision statement for the future of the City of Clearwater. As part of the workshop activities, they had seen the City Council's vision statement, but each set of attendees was essentially allowed to craft its own statements based on an open, full-group discussion.

The collected statements are included in their entirety as Appendix B. It is critical not to read too much into these statements given the manner in which they were created, but in reviewing all of them as a group, some interesting insights emerge.

There are recurring themes in these statements. People see a City that is diverse, yet welcoming. Mirroring the Council's stated initiative the attendees envision a City that is safe, clean and green. This City benefits from a great climate and a wonderful location, particularly with respect to the many water bodies. It is a haven for a wide variety of leisure-time activities, but is also economically diverse and business-friendly.

As drafted, all of these efforts are too long to qualify as true vision statements. Nonetheless, each clearly reflects those issues that were seen as important to the audience that helped craft it. In combination, they provide the City Council and leadership with a reasonable sense of the issues that they community would like to see developed and improved in the upcoming years.

Next Steps

One result of the City Council visioning workshops held early in 2005 was a slight re-working of the City's official vision statement, to be slightly more expansive and inclusive. A second result was the development of the thirteen priority initiatives to focus future efforts within the City. The third was the decision to hold the series of community-wide visioning workshops, in order to insure that the directions the City leaders and officials were looking to move matched the desires and concerns of the citizens of the community.

The results of the community workshops indicate the general accuracy of the City Council and staff in developing a set of priorities for future efforts in the community. The popularity of all thirteen stated initiatives is evidenced by the relative lack of separation amongst them in the community voting.

At the same time, it is difficult to build a focus around thirteen related, but distinct priorities. One thought that emerged in discussions with the Council and staff is to create a framework for future initiatives and projects by referencing them back to the City's official vision statement.

Sparkling Clearwater is a uniquely beautiful and vibrant waterfront community that is socially and economically diverse, reinvests in itself and is a wonderful place to live, learn, work and play.

As the Vision clearly states, Clearwater is a wonderful place to live, to learn, to work and to play. These four elements highlight the key priorities for the City in the near future.

Clearwater is a Wonderful Place to Live

It has:

- A Safe Clean Green Environment
- Safe Comfortable Walkable Neighborhoods
- Well Maintained Housing Stock in all Markets



Clearwater is a safe city, comprising diverse neighborhoods, all of which are comfortable and walkable, with well-maintained housing stock of all types and for all different markets. It is a clean city that is graffiti and litter free. It is a well landscaped city with many street trees, parks and nature preserves. It is also a “green city” that is environmentally friendly, with recycling programs and other efforts to reduce waste and enhance efficiency.

Clearwater is a Wonderful Place to Learn

It provides its citizens with:

- High Quality Education

In Clearwater, each and every child can reach his or her full educational potential. Adults, too, have numerous opportunities to expand their education, acquire new skills, or simply learn about various topics of interest. The City has established working partnerships with the County School Board, St. Petersburg College, local vocational schools and a host of other providers to insure that there are opportunities for all citizens to follow a path of lifelong learning.

Clearwater is a Wonderful Place to Work

It seeks:

- Economic Vitality and Reinvestment
- Diverse High-Paying Jobs

Clearwater looks to create and import wealth into the community, and fosters an environment that attracts new businesses and supports locally-owned enterprises. The City proactively identifies ways in which public investment can support private initiatives to both expand and diversify economic opportunities for the community with its different and diverse skills and people with all different levels of experience and expertise. The City particularly looks to create and attract “clean” jobs in the creative fields

Clearwater is a Wonderful Place to Play

It offers:

- A Variety of Cultural and Recreational Offerings

Clearwater offers a plethora of leisure-time opportunities to its residents. These include the numerous parks and active recreation facilities as well as access to the many water bodies that define the city’s geography. The City includes myriad opportunities for formal and informal cultural activities, ranging from Ruth Eckerd Hall with its national and international performances, to neighborhood community centers and libraries, downtown art galleries, and numerous performance venues.

Clearwater Provides the Infrastructure to Support all its Attributes

To ensure that the City remains a great place to live, learn, work and play, Clearwater invests in:

- Well Maintained Infrastructure
- Efficient Responsive City Services
- Efficient Transportation Systems
- Communication



Clearwater recognizes that a great city works effectively, efficiently and unobtrusively. Streets work well for pedestrians and vehicles; they are well lit and clean. There are increasing opportunities for those who chose to move about the City without recourse to a private automobile. Flooding is controlled and both potable and reclaimed water are available throughout the City. In addition, even as costs increase, the City continues to expand the range of services it provides, by working more efficiently and effectively, as a partner to citizens and neighborhoods alike. In part, this is underpinned by a culture of communication, where open and attentive dialogues occur consistently throughout the City, uniting individual citizens, neighborhood groups and the City leaders and staff.

Clearwater includes Special Places that Belong to Everyone in the Community

Two places in Clearwater are especially important to all its citizens:

- A Quality Beach Environment
- A Vibrant Downtown that's Mindful of its Heritage

Clearwater Beach helps define the City as a whole and is nationally and internationally recognized as a truly special place. A resource for residents, it also attracts visitors from around the globe, and includes opportunities, amenities and activities for citizen and visitors alike. At the same time, Downtown Clearwater is the historic heart of the City, and the one place where everyone can feel welcome and all elements of city life come together. It is a mixed-use environment that highlights the diversity of the City's opportunities to live, learn, work and play.

Mission Statement

The Mission of the City of Clearwater is to provide cost effective municipal services and infrastructure necessary for a high quality of life for all our citizens.

Summary

In general, the community visioning efforts undertaken by the City of Clearwater in Autumn 2005 support the direction and initiatives presented by the City Council and staff. In addition, these efforts offered considerable insight into the issues and concerns most important to the citizens of the community.

The next step for the City is to build upon the direction and focus provided by the community workshops. Eleven priorities emerged from the workshops, along with support for the redevelopment and revitalization of the Beach and the Downtown. What particular projects and initiatives will be developed to advance each of these priorities? What specific efforts will be undertaken to advance the transformation of the Beach and the Downtown?

