

# City of DeLand

## Strategic Plan

2007- 2011



## **VISION FOR DELAND, FLORIDA**

*DeLand will remain a city whose diverse citizens demonstrate a strong sense of community. The City will remain dedicated to preserving and enhancing those assets which make DeLand distinctive. We, as citizens of DeLand, will continue to strive to maintain DeLand's heritage as the "Athens of Florida."*

**Guiding Principles:** *To achieve this vision, the Commission has adopted a number of principles to guide it as it seeks to preserve and enhance the City's distinctive assets. These principles are presented below by major theme.*

**1. COMMUNITY. We will develop and implement programs and services that enhance the small town atmosphere and quality of life in DeLand by maintaining and / or developing:**

- a community of beautiful and safe neighborhoods, all with easily accessible public space, green space and bike and pedestrian friendly design;
- a culturally diverse community that values its diversity;
- a core community distinguished by its historic downtown, trees, Stetson University, and older, well maintained homes;
- downtown events that bring people together for a wide range of recreational, cultural, and intellectual events;
- a high level of citizen participation in the community, particularly in cross-generational, multi-cultural projects;
- infrastructure that provides interconnection between all community neighborhoods;
- services or infrastructure which help our community and residents remain healthy and mobile.

**2. EDUCATION. We will support comprehensive educational opportunities that provide our citizens with tools for their well being by:**

- recognizing the critical importance that education and work skills play in ensuring we can have the quality community we want;
- advocating for our educational institutions to meet the lifelong learning needs of our residents, our employers and our employees;
- advocating family and parenting skill development as the building blocks of education;
- advocating quality educational opportunities for all residents as a lifelong pursuit;
- advocating vocational programs that meet the needs of employers and employees;
- providing community education about government;
- advocating a community with advanced technology that supports the enhancement of education and the economy.

**3. ECONOMY. Recognizing that a healthy economy promotes our success, we will:**

- foster an entrepreneurial environment that supports local and start up businesses;
- have a sustainable growth policy requiring the wise use of fiscal and natural resources;
- foster an economy that encourages diverse and economically rewarding job opportunities for all, resulting in a strong tax base;
- foster an economy that takes advantage of our regional location, transportation connections and airport;
- develop an economic infrastructure that supports local, regional and global business practices;
- seek out active partners in regional economic development;
- emphasize and promote Ecological, Cultural, Heritage, and Outdoors [ECHO] Tourism;
- develop or advocate for transportation and mobility options that support economic activity.

**4. HISTORY. DeLand is identified as the “Athens of Florida.” That heritage started with the City’s Founder, Henry A. DeLand. Henry DeLand’s goal was to create a town dedicated to the advancement of education and culture, much like the Athens of Greece. To this end, he started the DeLand Academy, which became Stetson University and in fulfillment of his dream, DeLand has been a center for culture and education. Recognizing that our future is guided by our heritage, we will:**

- protect
  - our historic downtown
  - Stetson University
  - our neighborhoods
  - our other historic areas;
- encourage historic preservation and restoration efforts;
- advocate for flexible development standards for historic properties;
- encourage new development that complements the historic character of the core community;
- encourage functional reuse of historic buildings while maintaining the historic character of the community;
- support programs that emphasize and promote the historic attributes of the community.

## **Strategic Focus Area: Regional high value job creation.**

**Strategic Context:** This first strategy acknowledges that DeLand is part of an economic region and when the region benefits, DeLand benefits. Secondly, the strategy emphasizes that the desired end result is high value jobs. A high value job is one that generates a family supporting wage while also offering meaningful work that would retain the youth of a community.

### **Strategic Results:**

- Environmentally clean, high wage jobs.
- Increased diversity of the economic base of the community.

### **Strategies:**

#### **Retention and expansion of existing businesses and sites.**

##### ***Action Steps:***

1. Implement the new Airport master plan.
2. Work with County Economic Development to promote the DeLand Airport to facilitate diverse industries with clean jobs.
3. Develop business sites at airport.
  - a. Extend access road.
  - b. Develop "ready to build" sites.
4. Continue business retention /communication programs and efforts.
5. Continue business fair partnership.
6. As opportunities are presented coordinate with Enterprise Florida to promote international marketing.
7. Examine feasibility of tax exemption for historic building in commercial use downtown.

#### **New business development (business recruitment and site development).**

##### ***Action Steps:***

1. Assist Volusia County Economic Development in locating businesses at DeLand Crossings.
2. If private developers come forward, assist in developing the 472 Activity Center for regional economic development.
3. Maintain competitiveness with other cities.
  - a. Evaluate additional incentives for economic development.
4. Provide assistance to fill vacant industrial/commercial sites.
  - a. Downtown DeLand
  - b. Airport
  - c. Industrial areas
5. Market for new commercial/industrial businesses.
  - a. Solicitation of prospects to DeLand.
    - i. Target individual entrepreneurs for business start ups.

- b. Invite prospects to DeLand to tour opportunities.
  - c. Continue Business Fair.
6. Expand aviation related business development.

**Foster collaboration and partnerships**

***Action Steps:***

- 1. Provide a unified and coordinated strategy with County Government and other key economic development actors.
- 2. Participate as a member of the County's economic development program.
- 3. Cooperative efforts with other West Volusia cities.

## **Strategic Focus Area: Institute Smart Growth principles:**

**Strategic Context:** To manage growth, the City will need to institute a number of smart growth principles. For reasons of both community identity and governmental efficiency, an annexation strategy is required which will “square off” the City’s boundaries.

### **Strategic Results:**

- Annexation which will “square off” the City’s boundaries.
- Quality growth that preserves the character of the City.

### **Strategies:**

#### **Annexation**

##### *Action Steps:*

1. Insure public safety services are developed to meet needs of annexed area.
2. Require contiguous properties to annex.
3. Accelerate implementation of Utilities Capital Facilities Plan to meet needs of growth.
4. Emphasize citizen agreement to target small enclave areas.
5. Delay on Spring Hill annexation referendum until CRA has successfully implemented capital improvements and new programs.
6. Implement priority annexation strategies.
  - a. Long term annexation area is the DeLand Utility Service Area with short term goal the Greater DeLand Area.

#### **Redevelopment**

##### *Action Steps:*

1. Pursue downtown residential redevelopment.
2. Develop affordable / work force housing strategies.
3. Acquire additional land for inner city parks in support of Dutton House.
4. In cooperation with County, support Spring Hill redevelopment through the Spring Hill Community Redevelopment Agency.
5. Promote downtown commercial redevelopment with MainStreet DeLand.

#### **Community consistent growth**

##### *Action Steps:*

1. Acquire additional active and passive parkland. Provide 4.6 acres per 1,000 population.
2. Develop new regulations on densities. Balance trade off of densities with protection of conservation areas and affordable housing.
3. Encourage use of Planned Development Agreements in zonings.
4. Promote mixed use development that localizes traffic trips.

5. Adopt County sponsored stormwater requirements utilizing 100 year storm event.
6. Decrease rate differential between reuse and potable water to encourage conservation.
7. Work with other cities and county to build a water production facility on St. Johns River.
8. Review land development regulations and policies and incorporate smart growth principles that encourage smart growth.

## **Strategic Focus Area: Preserving “Sense of Community” in the core city as a key asset.**

**Strategic Context:** Throughout the strategic planning process, the term “sense of community” has been highly valued as a distinctive DeLand asset. The term is most often associated with downtown, the historic district, Stetson, and the old city grid. It is this core city identity that citizen’s want to maintain and preserve. This distinctiveness is critically important in the New Economy where sense of place is a highly valued asset. There is synergy between high value jobs and maintaining the current sense of place that distinguishes the core city.

### **Strategic Result:**

- Maintenance of distinctive core city.
- Preserve “sense of community” for long term as well as new residents.

### **Strategies:**

#### **Current asset protection and maintenance**

##### *Action Steps:*

1. Ensure that the quality of public investments is maintained through a long term maintenance plan.
  - a. Implement multi-year maintenance plan for downtown improvements. Invest in street furniture, trash cans, lights, signage and paver replacement and repairs.
    - i. Increase pedestrian friendly lighting in parking lots.

#### **Promote additional investment**

##### *Action Steps:*

1. Implementation of Streetscape Plan per the Downtown Master Plan.
  - a. Streetscape New York Avenue from Clara to Amelia.
  - b. Develop parking garage or new parking facility.
  - c. Streetscape West Georgia
  - d. Pedestrian lighting (parking lots).
  - e. Streetscape Florida Avenue.
2. Continue private investment in those core assets that define “sense of community”.
  - a. Encourage private investment in commercial redevelopment and residential restoration.
  - b. Provide incentives to encourage redevelopment of commercially underutilized buildings.
3. Implement parking lot improvements per Downtown Master Plan.
4. Analyze expansion of downtown historic district.
5. Implement other facets of Downtown Master Plan Update.
  - a. Develop alternate forms of transportation downtown linked to

- Intermodal Facility, i.e. downtown trolley.
- b. Continue partnership with MainStreet Association.
- c. Maintain linkage with Stetson facilities.

**Adopt and support public policies that promote community history or facilitate historic preservation in the downtown.**

*Action Step:*

1. Support preservation for historic structures in core city as well as throughout the City.

## **Strategic Focus Area: Creating the connected community.**

**Strategic Context:** It is the connections between the three elements identified so far which will create the economic dynamism and the community vibrancy desired by the citizenry. This connection takes form in four ways:

- **Key Corridors.** The City has two key corridors – Woodland and SR 44 and several gateways, e.g. 15A, that are important entry ways into the City. The look and feel of these corridors and gateways needs to be consistent with the Core City both to enhance the sense of community as well as permeate across the City the image of DeLand as a distinctive place which attracts high value wage earners and high value jobs.
- **Greenways.** This includes recreational areas, bike paths, urban trails, sidewalks and other physical connections which allow one to move about the city in a pedestrian manner. This connection fosters sense of community while also supporting the attractiveness of the City to high value jobs.
- **Information.** To attract high value jobs and high value wage earners and entrepreneurs, the City must offer access to the world through electronic means.
- **Comprehensive Code Enforcement on a targeted basis.** If the City is to maintain its competitive advantage as a real place with a sense of community, no part of the City can be allowed to deteriorate. Therefore code enforcement must be comprehensive, but used on a targeted, priority basis.

### **Strategic Results:**

- Mobility.
- Community aesthetics and appearance.
- Human and technological connections.
- Preserve sense of community for long term as well as new residents.

### **Strategies**

#### **Walkability and alternative mobility**

##### ***Action Steps:***

1. Continue implementation of sidewalk master plan with emphasis on safety and linking neighborhoods to each other and to the other features of the City, i.e. downtown, parks, schools, etc.
  - a. Continue the sidewalk construction using a ten year plan and repair all broken sidewalks within a five year program.
2. Implement ten year plan for bike paths. Provide urban trails plan linking residential areas to business area.

#### **Traffic Mobility**

##### ***Action Steps:***

1. Identify and implement options for traffic calming throughout the City.
2. Continue a program of stricter speed limit enforcement.

3. Continue street resurfacing 20 year plan.
4. Identify transportation needs and implement transportation impact fee.

## **Design and Appearance**

### *Action Steps:*

1. Implement code enforcement program for residential rentals.
2. Implement stronger code enforcement program for residential areas.
3. Complete design and award contract for construction of Alabama Greenway and Intermodal Transportation Facility.
  - a. Prepare conceptual plan for extending Greenway / bikeway.
4. Roadways:
  - a. Redesign City signs for adopt-a-road program (throughout the City).
5. General appearance:
  - a. Stronger code enforcement:
    - i. Enhance cleanliness of individual lots.
    - ii. Identify a few priority community wide code issues and develop proactive enforcement to eliminate.
  - b. Continue maintenance on perimeter of Oakdale Cemetery.
  - c. Maintain and enhance tree canopy.
6. Stronger code enforcement in commercial areas.
7. Enforce the City's design standards.
8. Maintain and improve the aesthetic appearance of the City.
  - a. Gateways:
    - i. Code Enforcement.
    - ii. Design Standards.
    - iii. Mowing, litter control, planting trees.
    - iv. Continue Joint code enforcement/gateway standards
  - b. Develop and map city wide list of condemnable structures and develop target program for razing condemnable structures.

## **People and partnership connections**

### *Action Steps:*

1. Explore development of youth center through partnership with other community organizations.

## **Strategic Focus Area: High value government.**

**Strategic Context:** To support the combination of high value jobs and sense of community a high value government must be fostered. This would include features such as:

- Increased use of e-governmental tools to communicate internally and externally.
- Alignment of resources to the strategic plan.
- Integrated city infrastructure structures with other public and private infrastructure sources.

### **Strategic Results:**

- Efficiency.
- Effectiveness.
- Organizational Capacity Leadership.
- Interaction with citizenry and access to city government.

### **Technology leadership**

#### ***Action Steps:***

1. Continue implementation of a strategic information technology plan.
2. Continue to position the City to be a municipal leader in the use of information technology for public services.
3. Enhance e-government capabilities.
  - a. Expand and continually improve city web site. Develop interactive website.
  - b. Endeavor to install all new customer accounts through electronic payments.
4. Facilitate partnering opportunities with other related infrastructure providers.
5. Provide education to city workforce on technology utilization.

### **Organizational Improvement**

#### ***Action Steps:***

1. Annually provide customer service training for employees.
2. Continue implementation of an organizational improvement / process re-engineering program.
3. Systematically and continuously review City functions from the perspective of how technology can improve efficiency and effectiveness.
4. Identify long term investments in technology, facilities, and training to enhance services and operations.
5. Systematically and continuously review City functions for improved efficiency and effectiveness and consider potential privatization advantages.

## **Facilities and infrastructure**

### ***Action Steps:***

1. Develop mechanisms for inspection of private stormwater facilities.
2. Expand park system to provide 4.6 acres per 1,000 citizens.
3. Continue maintenance of City facilities in accordance with five year maintenance plan.
4. Aggressively pursues expansion of reclaimed water system master plan for expansion.
5. Complete a comprehensive analysis of all underutilized public property in downtown and determine optimum future use.

## **Future planning**

### ***Action Steps:***

1. Continue annual five year budget projections with required 5 year staffing projections.
2. Maintain City Strategic Plan and update at City goal setting workshop.
3. Continue closest station response with Volusia County and coordinate public safety service delivery.
4. Implement water master plan and work with other jurisdictions to produce most cost efficient potable water as possible.
5. Finalize capital investments to alleviate future flooding of neighborhoods.
6. Implement ten year stormwater master plan.
7. Plan for increased cultural diversity and increased senior citizen population.
8. Evaluate Fire Public Safety Service Fee for non-tax paying properties
9. Evaluate expanding Sanborn Activity Center to meet demand for senior programs.
10. Develop a long term parks facility enhancement plan.

## **Service Improvements**

### ***Action Steps:***

1. Emphasize paperless recording keeping.
2. Maintain strong law enforcement presence in the community
3. Develop partnerships for better efficiency, reduced costs.
4. Develop interactive use of City web site.
5. Develop additional preventative public safety services that are not emergency services.

## **Staff development**

### ***Action Steps:***

1. Strengthen leadership/management skills of existing employee base.
2. Increase the number of minorities in City of DeLand upper management,

i.e. director of department, etc.

3. Provide technology training to City work force. Regular scheduled classes, technology curriculum, ask employees what they need.
4. Expand new employee orientation to include city wide operational orientation by Department.
5. Continue increase of staffing in Police Department.
6. Emphasize identified community and organizational values as accepted standard for operation of City.

## **Strategic Focus Area: Communication.**

**Strategic Context:** To maintain a high level of both internal communication within the City Government as well as ensure a two-way flow of information between the City Government and the citizens.

### **Strategic Results:**

- Informed and engaged citizenry and city employees.
- Improved access to city government.

### **Strategies**

**Public communication and outreach.** A comprehensive public relations approach incorporating newsletters, e-communications, outreach efforts and other identified tools for improving both public access to and understanding of government, as well as to increase public participation in civic affairs.

#### *Action Steps:*

1. Continue community relations/public relations program.
2. Enhance the program for communication between the City Commission and the community.
3. Emphasize personal contacts with citizens vs. heavy reliance on electronic communication.
4. Establish an electronic bulletin board for communication of City successes and accomplishments.
5. Enhance communication between public safety and citizens.
6. Write and circulate three citizen newsletters and four employee newsletters.
7. Write and distribute one annual report
8. Continue community survey.

### **Citizenship development**

#### *Action Steps:*

1. Continue local student government academy designed to provide high school students with knowledge of local government (Chamber, High School).
2. Develop Citizen Government Academy in conjunction with Chamber.

### **Expanded access**

#### *Action Steps:*

1. Continue the Circle of Community Partners effort.
2. Continue a City Commission citizen concern response system.
3. Conduct three Town Hall meetings.

## **Legislative**

### ***Action Steps:***

1. Continue development of annual legislative action platform.
2. Communicate policy positions of City to State legislators on specific State legislative initiatives.

## **Strategic Focus Area: Preparing for the Future**

**Strategic Context:** Recognizing that the City itself is dynamic and that extensive changes will occur in the region in the near and long term future, it is important that there be a strategic focus on the future.

### **Strategic Results:**

- Identification of emerging issues that can impact the City.
- Proactive development of plans and strategies to address those issues.

### **Strategies**

**Identification of emerging issues and options regarding a growing senior population.**

**Identification of emerging issues and options regarding health care services in the community.**

**Recognize and where possible facilitate or participate in mobility (transportation) planning for the community in the regional context.**

**Reduction of homelessness.**

**Increase opportunities for affordable housing.**

**Identify and facilitate means to address community social needs.**

**A Strategic Plan for the City of DeLand**

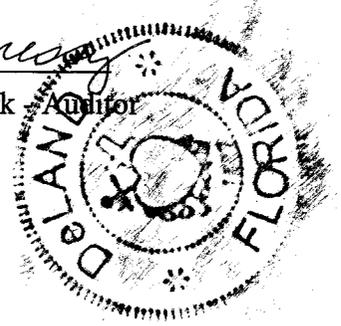
Approved by the City Commission of the City of DeLand this 4<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2007.

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