

INTERGOVERNMENTAL, INTERAGENCY AND PUBLIC COORDINATION AND INVOLVEMENT *to optimize the countywide potential of the Gateway Area*

County government is only one of the players planning for the future of the Gateway Area. The cities of St. Petersburg, Pinellas Park and Largo all have their varied and vested interests in the economic potential of the Area. Long range planning for the Area can occur independently or in concert with one another. There are currently several different plans underway or being implemented in the Gateway Area. For example, there are several large Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs) in varying stages of build-out, in the City of St. Petersburg especially. The County has just approved the Master Plan for the St. Petersburg – Clearwater International Airport. A master development plan will be required for the Airco property. The City of Largo has developed a strategic redevelopment plan that includes a portion of the Gateway Area. There are four local governments and four comprehensive plans that affect the Gateway Area. The Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization is responsible for long-range transportation planning for the Area. Revitalization plans are underway for the unincorporated Highpoint community, and several municipalities have annexation plans that will affect the Area. There are long range watershed plans and environmental restoration plans that affect the Gateway Area and involve area governments, agencies and federal partners. Perhaps more than any other location in the County, the Gateway Area is a confluence of economic interest, activity and opportunity.

But Gateway is also comprised of several residential communities, unincorporated and municipal, and those residents also have a vested interest in the future of the Gateway Area. Necessarily then, each government must also engage their residents in the planning process for the Gateway Area.

It would seem that planning independently by affected local governments with individual interests will surely not maximize the potential of the Area as a whole. Rather, a commitment to intergovernmental and interagency coordination and mutually-beneficial collaboration on common goals seems critical to maximizing the potential of the Area. For example, the long range planning for County properties and County and countywide interests should be coordinated with the interests and activities underway in the cities. Importantly, each affected local government is in the process of preparing for a major State-mandated update to their local comprehensive plan (referred to as an evaluation and appraisal report) so the timing is appropriate for coordination of, for example, local comprehensive plans, policies and land development regulations. Notably, public involvement is a key component of comprehensive planning in order to make sure that the long-range vision of the community, and not just the government, is represented.

Recommendations for coordination include:

RECOMMENDATIONS

Amend the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan to include specific commitments and strategies for coordinating with other governments and agencies to achieve common goals in the Gateway Area.

Obtain input from the elected officials of each affected government to determine whether the opportunity for **more formal coordination**, (via a mechanism like a Chapter 163.3245, F.S., Sector Plan, an Area-Wide DRI, a land use or zoning overlay, an alliance of businesses, etc.) would provide unity and multi-jurisdictional benefit to planning and development in the Gateway Area.

Convene with, coordinate and collaborate with, municipal governments and agencies to discuss and identify common goals, issues, opportunities, and priorities for the Gateway Area. Opportunities for mutually beneficial and formalized coordination might include:

- Development and implementation of consistent concurrency management approaches (i.e., managing the impacts of development approvals on facility operating conditions) and overall transportation planning and management strategies for the Area.
- Land use planning, redevelopment planning and decision-making, focusing on the road corridors that serve as a gateway to the Area.
- Obtaining funding for projects or improvements that are mutually beneficial.
- Watershed and regulatory planning, and implementation of innovations in environmental projects and design.
- Development of a specialized economic plan for the Gateway Area.
- Partnering on solutions to the recreational needs in the Highpoint/East Largo area.

Convene County task team(s) to implement Board priorities, which include intergovernmental coordination and planning to achieve individual and countywide benefit.

Include **public input** in the planning process, and include citizen and business representatives on appropriate task teams.