



Pinellas By Design Plan Implementation Progress

Adopted in 2005, Pinellas By Design: An Economic Development and Redevelopment Plan, is the county's redevelopment strategy to foster business development, while managing population growth and preserving our quality of life. The purpose of Pinellas by Design was to identify the means by which the county can maintain and enhance its long-term economic vitality, which is threatened by the disappearance of developable vacant land. Almost every local government has passed a resolution in support of the plan, which was designed so that each community will be able to define its future vision within a shared planning framework. For detailed information on the five year planning process, including community input, analysis, and related studies go to www.pinellasbydesign.org.

Pinellas by Design estimated that some 50,000 new jobs at salary levels approximately thirty percent above the average wage will need to be created over the twenty year period through 2025 to maintain the same level of economic health that the county has enjoyed over the previous twenty years. Absent a concerted effort and coordinated public policy it will be difficult to achieve this goal, particularly as we reach build out, and the ability of the private sector to find and utilize the land necessary to locate and expand business opportunities is limited.

The multi-faceted implementation includes **regulatory, real estate and economic development programs** that will ensure adequate opportunity to preserve and expand the potential for high-wage job creation.

Regulatory Updates:

Livable Communities - In 2008, Pinellas County approved a set of model comprehensive plan policies and land development codes designed to implement livable community features in the design and construction of streetscape improvements and land development projects. The term "livable communities" is used to describe urban environments where walking, bicycling and transit service is safe, comfortable and efficient and where the physical environment offers an interesting and unique experience from the standpoint of street, land and building design. Another key aspect of livable communities is the mixing of land uses which allows people to live closer to their points of destination such as shopping and work locations.

<http://www.pinellascounty.org/mpo/LivableCommunity.htm>

Redevelopment Land Use Categories - A Countywide Rule amendment created four new future land use categories, which are designed to allow local governments flexibility in planning for redevelopment through special area plans. The new "Planned Redevelopment" categories include Residential, Mixed Use, Commercial and Industrial. The City of St. Petersburg was the first to amend its own future land use map to include three of the new categories, and has applied them to approximately 10,350 acres. Now others are using this new tool, like Tarpon Springs which is applying it to support a significant mixed-use development in its city.

<http://www.co.pinellas.fl.us/PPC/default.htm>

Hotel Densities - A Countywide Rule amendment allows temporary lodging densities in some future land use categories to be increased if certain conditions are met. Depending on the size of the site and other conditions, 50 to 150 percent more hotel rooms can be built per acre. The changes were crafted in order to help hotel and motel uses, which are vital to support the local tourism economy remain economically competitive with high-end residential condominium redevelopment. Pinellas County's tourism industry has lost almost 5,000 hotel and motel rooms over the past few years to residential condominium development. The changes will allow each community in Pinellas to have the option to either increase density for hotels, subject to certain guidelines, or keep the status quo. <http://www.co.pinellas.fl.us/PPC/default.htm>

Comprehensive Planning – The Economic Development and Planning Departments' staff are working together to create an Economic Development Element for the County's Comprehensive Plan. This will allow many of the principles of Pinellas By Design and its related studies to be codified. The Economic Element Goals, Objectives and Policies can be found at http://www.pced.org/download/document/20081104_143441_18273.pdf

Real Estate:

Industrial Land - A detailed study of the supply and demand of industrial land in Pinellas County begun in 2006 was approved by the Board of County Commissioners in April 2008. More than 2,000 businesses in targeted industry clusters were surveyed about their use of and need for industrial-designated land and other types of real estate for the **Target Employment and Industrial Land Study**. The feedback was combined with an analysis of the existing land supply using geographic information system (GIS) technology. The final report recommends long-term regulatory and economic strategies for ensuring a supply of appropriately located, economically viable real estate that can accommodate high-wage primary employers. To view a copy of the final report, go to http://www.pced.org/download/document/20080415_100058_19695.pdf

Toytown – On July 1, 2008 the Pinellas Board of County Commissioners approved the purchase and sale agreement for Toytown, a 240-acre historic landfill in mid-county with excellent interstate access. An extensive due diligence and development review process is now underway to further determine the feasibility of the plan to create an entirely new planned community – **Villages at Gateway Fields**. This ambitious project proposes to remake Toytown into a mixed-use village that will allow residents to live, work, play and shop within a livable community designed to encourage walking, biking and mass transit. The proposal conceived by Florida Gateway Development LLC plans to create 2 million square feet of office space; 1.5 million square feet of retail; 375 hotel rooms with 50,000 square feet of meeting and convention space; and a residential village with a workforce housing component. Importantly, the proposal also includes 70 acres of new parks and recreation facilities. www.pced.org/toytown

Airco – On October 28, 2008, the Pinellas Board of County Commissioners received the Market and Feasibility Analysis and Implementation Recommendations for the county-owned Airco Golf Course. The County Commission agreed to explore closing the course and using its 123 acres for aviation, office, industrial and hotel uses based on report's findings. The study recommended that approximately 45 acres be reserved for aviation uses including 25 acres for various bulk hangars and 20 acres for aprons and taxi areas; and the remaining 78 acres be used for office, industrial uses and hotel uses.

The office and industrial would be the economic development focus of any realized redevelopment of the site – providing nearly **one million square feet of new space to support high-wage job creation**. This long term project will be dependent on extensive planning, permitting and infrastructure improvements, including significant transportation related issues. The Airco Golf Course will continue to operation as usual into the foreseeable future. Go to www.pced.org/airco

Real Estate Listings - Three new categories of “For Sale” opportunities are now on the County’s real estate database. Property owners can advertise their shopping centers, hotel/motels and retail properties advertised on the site. The inclusion of these new categories exemplifies the county’s changing focus to redevelopment, since aging shopping centers, old restaurants and hotel properties offer excellent opportunities for redevelopment - www.pced.org/realestate.

Economic Development

Pinellas by Design identified two important measures by which the local economy should be evaluated: size determined by the total earnings of all the workers in the county, and quality, determined by the average earnings per worker. In order to sustain the level of prosperity that the county currently enjoys, it will be necessary to enhance both size and quality. The plan established preliminary estimates and projections for future employment growth, based both on the overall number of jobs (which influences the size of the economy), and the number of jobs provided by high-wage primary businesses (which affects the quality of the economy). Primary businesses are defined as those that import at least 51 percent of their annual revenues from outside the local area), while high-wage jobs are those that pay at least 130 percent of the average annual wage. The plan concluded that to maintain growth in the size and quality of the county’s economy, it will be necessary to create approximately 278,000 new jobs of which 50,000 are primary high-wage jobs over the next twenty years.

Moving with national trends, the total employment for the county was 447,372 in September 2008, down from 475,780 in September 2007 – a loss of 28,408 jobs. The unemployment rate in Pinellas County for September 2008 was 6.7%. This was up from a rate of 4.3% in September 2007. Florida’s rate for unemployment in September 2008 was 6.8% and the United States rate was 6.0%. Pinellas County’s 2007 annual average wage across all industries was \$38,007, up from the 2006 annual average wage of \$36,981. (Source: Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation)

During FY2008, **Pinellas County Economic Development processed nine new projects** for expansion and relocation incentives. These growing companies will create 1,564 new jobs with an average annual wage of approximately \$47,309 and will retain 3,057 existing employees. The collective capital investment expected from these projects exceeds \$95 million. **Pinellas County also led the State for the fifth straight year** in the amount of Incumbent Worker Training funds disbursed to local companies to upgrade the skills of their current employees. Almost \$600,000 (out of a total state pool of \$2,000,000) in state funding was awarded to twenty-seven Pinellas County companies to train 1,957 workers.

Also in 2008, ground breaking was held on the internationally-recognized research, development and commercialization group **SRI-International**. Their facility is currently under construction and will open in 2009 with plans for nearly 200 employees and much

greater expectations for future spin-offs with high-wage job creation potential. The County also lured the **Charles Stark Draper Laboratory, Inc.**, one of the world's leading independent research and development laboratories engaged in applied research, engineering and development, to establish Multi Chip Module (MCM) Center in St. Petersburg. Between the MCM Center and a new BioMEMS R&D Center in Tampa, Draper will create 165 new jobs, with an average wage of \$75,000.

Partnerships and Awareness:

Pinellas By Design recognized that the county can not implement a redevelopment strategy on its own. Partnerships with local municipalities, regulatory agencies, community development groups and the private sector will be needed for a successful redevelopment program. Ultimately the county seeks to encourage high quality projects that match the vision of each community. To assist the many agencies and individuals promoting redevelopment in Pinellas County, the county has produced new collateral materials focused on redevelopment.

In 2008, **Pinellas County was the recipient of the state-wide award for marketing materials** by both the Florida Economic Development Council and the Florida Redevelopment Association for **The Communities of Pinellas** brochure and collateral. The redevelopment brochure provides an overview of the county, promotes awareness of redevelopment opportunities, and highlights redevelopment efforts and investment. Brochure inserts provide quarterly real estate updates, contact information, incentive program descriptions, and updates on major redevelopment projects around the county. The recognition by both agencies demonstrates the County's leadership in connecting redevelopment with economic development efforts at a local level, an inherent and critical component of the County's Pinellas By Design redevelopment strategy.

Web pages devoted to redevelopment are at www.pced.org/redevelopment and include weekly news stories, significant project updates, maps, data, contacts and incentive programs. This offers a one stop source for potential investors and developers to learn about Pinellas, its varied communities and our overall strategies for redevelopment.