

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

July 17, 2019

All Board members were in attendance. Lillian Conrad was the non-voting Utilities Commission representative to the Board.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. The NSB Assistant City Attorney presented a program on the Florida Sunshine Law with some scenarios outlining illegal actions under the law.

1. The Volusia County Sustainability and Volunteer Coordinator, Danielle Ramsey, presented a program outlining the county's Green Volusia Sustainability in Business Plan. The presentation included other Florida cities and counties that have implemented such plans and their various structures and rewards. The Board showed great interest in establishing a plan for the City of New Smyrna Beach and asked Ms. Ramsey for additional information and data to further discuss the opportunity to establish such a program for New Smyrna Beach.

OLD BUSINESS:

A copy of the city's 2015 Economic Development Strategic SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Plan was reviewed and updated. Each board member provided, in their opinion, the top three Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats to the City currently. Some items discussed for addition at this meeting where: Strength – Educational opportunities with colleges, black culture and history, Canal and Flagler historic districts and walkable streets. Weakness – Parking, shortage of Labor, Lack of infrastructure on Route 44, and lack of affordable housing. Opportunities – Encourage P&Z to make quicker decisions, branding of the city, green sustainability of businesses and marketing of Brannon Center. Threats – Traffic congestion, lack of city infrastructure, loss of airport and loss of medical facility. This Plan will continue to be updated throughout the year with the final document presented to the City Commission at the end of 2019.

NEW BUSINESS:

A representative from Team Volusia spoke to and was questioned about the City's renewal of the Team Volusia's FY19-20 contract in the amount of \$25,000. Some Board Members expressed concern that during the City's nine (9) years of participation it had seen little return on its investment. The Board asked for more documentation from Team Volusia as to its effectiveness in bringing business to the City of New Smyrna Beach prior to deciding to renew the contract.

No further business coming before the Board the meeting was adjourned.

SWOT Analysis

The City's Economic Development Advisory Board completed a SWOT Analysis (listing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) as follows:

STRENGTHS:

1. **TOOLS** that are in place: Tax Incentives and Brownfield designation, CRA
2. **Water Sports** – help the surfing industry thrive here, utilize full potential of marinas and all water access: large yacht docking & access, fishing, scuba, boat tours, Surf Museum, Marine Discovery Center, positive international recognition
3. **NSB Inlet and access to the sea** – potential for many hi-tech and environmental companies that need the access - Develop wave energy production etc.
4. **AIRPORT:** utilize to its fullest potential, combine lots or look for larger inventory, connect and open up Airway "Circle". (Note: Florida is number 2 among states for aviation.)
5. **People want to be near the beach, or boat docks to bring their company here**
6. **Excellent education system** – with excellent Sports Complex to be marketed further, close proximity to DSC, Embry Riddle, Bethune Cookman, UCF
7. **Health Care District** – Florida Hospital and Bert Fish working out agreements, assisted living center being built on SR44 and a new ALF proposed on US 1
8. **Utilize the former FEC property near S US 1 to the west** – approximately 180 acres designated as Industrial Mixed Use on the City's future land use map, near the mainland downtown – perfect for professional offices and light manufacturing, eventually develop a train station for passenger service, could feed into the hospital district and Canal St.
9. **Health Care District** – Florida Hospital and Bert Fish working out agreements, assisted living center being built on SR44 and on US 1.
10. **Undeveloped land at SR 44 & I-95** - parcels perfect for R&D high-tech companies. Other property at 44 and I-95 also residential
11. **City "Ready" program** for interested expanding or incoming businesses
12. **Cultural Icons:** ACA, The Hub, Little Theater, Artist's Workshop
13. **Tourism is maintaining itself** – City doesn't need to market any further, we have growing momentum that is maintained by Team Volusia, SVAA and the Chamber
14. **Many want to relocate to NSB for quality of life and start a business near where they live**
15. **Assets include the beach and the Canaveral National Seashore**
16. **The County-funded Tourism Study found that New Smyrna Beach attracts tourists who typically have higher incomes than tourists in Daytona Beach.**

WEAKNESSES:

1. **Reliance on Tourism - Build up other sectors: look at what INVENTORY we have, polish our product to attract – and DEFINE OUR VISION for what types of businesses we are looking for – Light manufacturing, office park etc. with higher paying job opportunities**
2. **Limited shovel-ready land**
3. **Infrastructure on SR 44 and US 1 – need to collaborate with UC to improve or install utilities to encourage business locations there**
4. **Parking Shortage & road systems:**
 - a. **Crowded road conditions with traffic problems from beachgoers – 111,000 last year just at the Flagler ramp. Police presence is very limited and DUI is common. It will eventually drive people from NSB if something isn't done. In addition, at times high tide closes the Flagler Ave beach ramp.**
 - b. **Poor traffic circulation at times on SR 44, Canal St, the North Causeway, and Flagler Ave**
5. **Short supply of "affordable" housing for first-time home buyers (not Section 8).**
6. **Lack of crosswalks in developing areas**
7. **Lack of Class A office space**
8. **Labor Pool: a lack of trained workers for manufacturing**

OPPORTUNITIES:

1. **Redevelopment of US 1 through the US 1 CRA**
2. **Capitalize on our core strengths (above)**
 - a. **The Cultural Arts industry in the City is a key opportunity for growth.**
 - b. **utilize available land at I-95 and 44**
 - c. **develop Airport industrial area**
 - d. **attracting water sport companies, attract hi-tech environmental sea-use companies**
3. **Recruit R&D and health care related companies – (growing with aging population)**
4. **Health care center and expansion with Bert Fish/ Florida Hospital purchase**
5. **New Civic Center to host events and conferences, with company meeting rooms - this offers more exposure for the City.**
6. **Research small, quality manufacturing companies looking to move here from other areas**
7. **The Cultural Arts industry in the City is a key opportunity for growth.**
8. **Marina and large slip development near downtown**
9. **Opportunity for collaboration with Volusia County and the Florida Department of Transportation to resolve traffic access problems.**
10. **Bed and breakfast and hotels to utilize for conferences, oceanfront/riverfront, downtown**
11. **Branding: the City should enhance its sense of place through Branding**

12. Geosams Capital LLC announced on September 25, 2015 that their US Corporate Office would be re-locating to New Smyrna Beach. This is a key opportunity to market the City as a location for corporate offices due to the availability of land to be developed at the I-95/SR 44 interchange and the outstanding quality of life.

THREATS:

1. Having the look and feel of a place with a large traffic artery, which threatens the New Smyrna Beach sense of place and branding efforts
2. Need room to grow for industry; Edgewater and DeLand and neighboring cities are our big competition
3. Inconsistent relationship with Volusia County for cooperation with parking and traffic problems
4. No funds available for grants now to lure incoming businesses
5. Limited State/County funding for local projects – City Manager has been aggressive in looking, but maybe we can hire someone to lobby for us in Tallahassee
6. Lack of central sewer service on portions of SR 44.
7. Hospital may re-locate. (Note: The “Economic Development Strategic Plan, City of Edgewater, Florida, 2015” notes:
 - a. On p. 44: “Expansion of health care and medical facilities in the City is a leading need and priority, particularly a community hospital... Current and expected future levels of population in the Edgewater area are such that planning for a new community hospital should begin. Next steps include discussions of needs and opportunities for a community hospital in Edgewater with hospital planners for facilities in the region, such as Florida Hospital and Halifax Health, the largest providers in Volusia County.”
 - b. On p. 66, Objective 3.3, “Expand Health Care and Medical Services”, includes Objective 3.3.3: “Present and discuss the master plan for the new community civic campus with potential health care providers. (ONGOING).” on p. 66)

With these strengths and opportunities, and mindful of our weaknesses and threats, the City will move forward to accomplish its vision by building on its strengths and capitalizing on its opportunities.

The City of New Smyrna Beach is unique. It is an internationally acclaimed surfing location, one of the oldest cities in Florida, and a center for the arts as the home of the Atlantic Center for the Arts and numerous art galleries. These features have produced a high quality of life with a tourism driven economy, and the highest income tourist group (as identified in the Volusia County Tourism Study dated February, 2013). However, the City Commission is seeking balance – more high wage jobs to offset the wages for the majority of wages in the tourism industry.