



State of the City

Highlights from the January 19, 2016, State of the City Report

The State of the City was presented by City Manager Darren Gray.

THE CITY TODAY

- During the last three years, the City has had a busy agenda. Here are some of the many projects that were completed since 2013:
- **2013**
 - The City of Clermont held a retreat for the Council Members followed by series of visioning sessions in which the community was asked what they wanted for the future of the city.
 - More than 1,000 people attended those sessions.
 - Residents said they wanted more recreation, especially for the youth; more entertainment and wanted to have a thriving downtown. The South Lake Trail and parks were high on the list of things they liked about Clermont.
 - The City purchased a former megachurch that had spaces for entertainment and recreation.
- **2014**
 - The City opened the Clermont Arts and Recreation Center.
 - In the summer of 2014, the City Council approved a new brand: Clermont – Choice of Champions®.
 - In November, the City opened Lake Hiawatha Preserve, a 220-acre passive park.
- **2015**
 - The Clermont Boathouse held its grand opening in February, 2015.
 - The Boathouse hosted a nationally-sanctioned, regional regatta.
 - The City Council approved a Master Plan that will serve as a blueprint for the city's growth during the next 5-10 years, especially in the downtown-waterfront core.
 - Champions Splash Park opened in March and was an immediate hit with several thousand children enjoying the park within the first few days.
 - The City held its first 4th of July in modern history. The event is now an annual signature event of the city.
 - The Clermont Performing Arts Center launched its inaugural season in September. The gala grand opening featured Rock-and-Roll Hall-of-Famer Darlene Love. Other shows in 2015 included: "Mutts Gone Nuts," "The Toy Shoppe starring Alan Thicke," "Menopause The Musical®" and "The Motortown All Stars' Christmas Spectacular."

PROGRESS OF THE MASTER PLAN

- The Master Plan includes six major projects.
- The City Manager highlighted progress on three of the projects.

continued



PROGRESS OF THE MASTER PLAN (continued)

Each of the projects represents a solution to a challenge facing the downtown-waterfront core.

PROJECT: SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING

CHALLENGE:

People traveling on Highway 50 or the South Lake Trail are often unaware of downtown Clermont

SOLUTIONS:

- Branded signs with clear directions placed at strategic locations throughout downtown Clermont and Waterfront Park.
- Gateway signage to downtown in the area of 8th Street on Highway 50 (in design).
- Other gateway signage at the East and West city-limit boundaries.
- Better signage at the Highway 27 entrance to the Clermont Performing Arts Center.

PROJECT: WEST LAKE WETLANDS PARK

CHALLENGE:

Stormwater treatment is need on the west side of the downtown area in order to make the surrounding property more viable for development and to filter the water before it runs off onto the trail or Lake Minneola.

SOLUTIONS:

- Create a retention pond and passive park – tentatively called West Lake Wetlands Park -- that would include an observation deck and walking area to handle stormwater for the surrounding area. It would also polish the stormwater before it ran into any nearby area.
- The City has already started seeking grant funding.
- The Council approved seed money to assist in seeking funding sources and potential investors.
- The design phase of the project could start in early spring with construction beginning in late summer, depending upon funding.

PROJECT: THE PROMENADE

CHALLENGE:

The current location of many events and festivals at Waterfront Park are too far from downtown to benefit the merchants along Montrose Street and adjoining areas.

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PROJECT: THE PROMENADE (continued)

SOLUTIONS:

- The Promenade is the flagship project of the whole Master Plan.
- It creates an exciting, new destination at Waterfront Park that shifts many activities to the bottom of 8th Street – giving a direct view of downtown and puts the activities within close walking and biking distance.
- The design phase is expected to start later this year.
- Because of the size of the project, construction will take place over the next couple of years.

A key element of the Master Plan: Maximize people who come downtown through living there, staying overnight or visiting at events.

The Promenade would be a space for small festivals, regattas, running and biking events and music festivals.

The Promenade would include an expanded pier with docking capabilities at the foot of 8th Street. This special venue would generate business for Montrose Street businesses and others in the vicinity from people arriving on land or by water.

OTHER ACTIONS IN PROGRESS RELATED TO THE MASTER PLAN

- Density study
- A City Council retreat planned for Feb. 29, 2016
- Expanded CRA District that will all for increased funding from the county and expanded incentive programs.

NEW PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS TARGETED FOR 2016

- **NEW POLICE STATION.** It is under construction; located on the Arts and Recreation Center property.
- **FIRE STATION #4:** The first joint station in the county. Clermont firefighters will share the new facility with members of the Lake County Fire Department.
- **NEW SIGNAGE AT THE ARC ENTRANCE.** New signage at the Highway 27 entrance is important for the success of the Clermont Performing Arts Center and the arts and recreation programs. Design is near completion.
- **MEET US IN THE MIDDLE.** The City plans to launch a major initiative to promote Clermont's central location on the Coast-to-Coast Connector. We are in the process of trademarking the phrase and have started design of a destination point on the trail, marking the spot that will draw visitors and also take advantage of social media marketing opportunities.
- **CITIZENS ACADEMY.** Beginning in March, the City will roll out a new Citizens Academy, which will give citizens a close-up look at how our government works. Some examples:
 - **The latest in CSI type forensics used by our police department.**
 - **Tour of the fire station and a close-up look at the apparatus.**
 - **Learn how the city turns polluted water into crystal clear reclaimed water.**
 - **Be a star on the stage at the Clermont Performing Arts Center.**



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CONCLUDING COMMENTS –

2016 is going to be a busy, exciting year for Clermont, the Choice of Champions!

It will be a year when we know the national spotlight will be on our city as many of the world's elite athletes come here to train on the Road to Rio and the 2016 Summer Olympics.

If you would like to find out more about the Master Plan, you can view and download the entire plan at our City website: www.ClermontFL.gov.

If you would like to receive the latest news and events happening in the City of Clermont, send your name and email address to: dbloodsworth@clermontfl.org or call 352-241-7345.