

CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS



TOMORROW'S VISION

12/12/2005



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TOMORROW'S VISION

Introduction

In 2004, the Green Cove Springs City Council embarked on a visioning process to determine what the city should be in the future. The process began with the City Council reviewing goals of previous City Councils. The City Council then appointed a Vision Committee to chart the future of Green Cove Springs. The Vision Committee worked on developing goals for the future of Green Cove Springs and presented the goals to stakeholders at a community wide meeting. After the goals were ranked, the Vision Committee developed actions to assure implementation of the goals.

Previous Goals

In March of 2005, the City Council began the visioning process by reviewing results of previous goal setting sessions. The City Council reviewed the goals to determine if the goals had been accomplished, were still relevant, or were not relevant. Table 1 contains the list of goals after the review by the City Council. The goals were divided up into three general groups; infrastructure, quality, and land development and planning.



**Table 1
Ranking of Previous Goals**

GOALS	Completed	Not Relevant	Still Relevant
INFRASTRUCTURE			
Pave Dirt Streets	X		
Restore Brick Streets			X
Complete "As-Built" Water and Sewer Map	X		
Develop Plan for Increasing Capacity of Water System			X
Expand Water and Sewer Service Area	X		
Execute Interlocal with CCUA	X		
Develop a Streets Improvement Plan	X		X
Develop Standards for Expansion of the Sewer System	X		
Develop Standards for Expansion of the Water System	X		
Investigate the Feasibility of Selling the Electric Company	X		
Design a New City Hall with a 30-year life	X		
Consolidate City Fire Department with the County	X		
Investigate the Future of the Police Department			X
QUALITY			
Increase Customer Service Training			X
Develop and Carry Out Community Pride Activities			X
Be Proactive with the Media to Promote GCS			X
LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS AND REDEVELOPMENT			
Adopt Historic Preservation Ordinance			X
Adopt Central Business District Regulations	X		
Design and Adopt a Central Business District Parking Plan			X
Complete a Master Plan for Spring Park	X		
Expand Vera Francis Hall Park			X
Expand Business in Green Cove Springs			X
Provide incentives for Appearance based regulations			X
Develop a Streetscape Plan with Landscape and Tree Requirements			X
Provide for One-Stop Permitting			X
Improve the Development Review Process			X
Create a System of Zoning Overlay Districts with Development Standards			X
Revisit and Reactivate the Community Redevelopment Agency			X
Review the Site Development Requirements, i.e., Landscaping and Signage	X		
Maintain the Small Town Character of Green Cove Springs			X
Promote Commercial Development along Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.			X
Review Parking Requirements to Assure Adequate Parking	X		
Promote the Development of Lodging in the City			X
Promote Industrial Development in Green Cove Springs			X
Review the Impact of By-Pass Roads to the City			X

GOALS	Completed	Not Relevant	Still Relevant
Promote the Usage of the Creeks and River by Canoes with Recreation Tours			X
Promote Downtown Development With Restaurants			X
Redevelop the Car Dealerships Sites			X

The City Council discovered that many of the earlier goals of other planning and visioning sessions had been completed. These included:

- Paving streets
- Completing an “As Built” water and sewer map
- Expansion of water and sewer service
- An Agreement with the Clay County Utilities agency
- Development of a Streets Improvement Plan
- Design of a new City Hall for Green Cove Springs
- Consolidation of the Fire Department with the County
- Central Business District regulations
- Master Plan for Spring Park
- One-Stop Permitting process in the city
- Improvements to the Development Review process

The goals that were considered to still be relevant to the City Council in 2005 were then divided into eight ‘Issue Areas’. The City Council members ranked the Issues Areas based on the priority of importance. The following are the issue areas in ranked order:

- Redevelopment
- Planning and Land Development
- Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Recreation and Open Space
- Annexation Issues
- Intergovernmental Coordination
- Adjoining Development

This early ‘plan of action’, which began in the spring, resulted in long lists of challenges and areas of interest to be considered by the Visioning Committee members.

Vision Committee Established

Each City Council member appointed three members to the Vision Committee. All appointed members had to be residents or property owners of the City of Green Cove Springs. In addition to the appointed members, members of the Planning and Zoning Board and the City Council were invited to be a part of the Vision Committee. The first meeting of the Vision Committee was held on May 17, 2005.

One of the first challenges of the committee was to develop a name for committee. The committee decided to be named **Tomorrow's Vision**.

Initially, the group decided to review existing plans that had been prepared for the City of Green Cove Springs and previous visioning sessions that had been held in the City. Some of the historical documents revisited were the Master Plan for Vera Francis Hall Park, the Redevelopment Plan prepared by the University of Florida in 1995, the early interest in developing a Community Redevelopment Agency and others.



The Tomorrow's Vision Committee divided up into 5 subcommittees to review previous goals and expand as needed to address current and future needs of Green Cove Springs. The subcommittees formed were the top ranked issues areas identified by the City Council. They were:

- Redevelopment
- Planning and Land Development
- Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Recreation and Open Space

Mission Statement

Another subject undertaken by the Tomorrow's Vision Committee was creating a mission statement for the committee. This was discussed and many options were presented to the group by the various subcommittees. The mission statement was developed over the course of the visioning exercises and often encompassed a respect and desire to preserve the past of the City while preparing for the future. The following is the mission statement that was another concrete outgrowth of the summer's visioning sessions.

"Tomorrow's Vision will create a plan that will define our unique identity, assure quality of life and make Green Cove Springs a premier 21st century city that reflects our traditional values, natural features and historic characteristics".

Priorities Developed

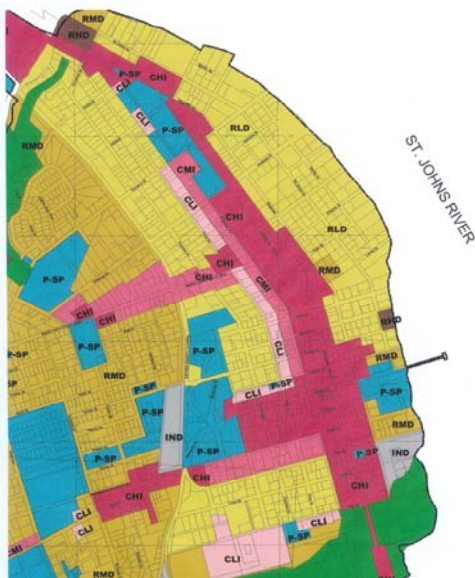
The Tomorrow's Vision Committee met bi-weekly during the summer of 2005 to inventory, prioritize and map the future of the City. This process sought to involve citizens from all walks of life, through workshops and focus area subcommittee work, determined by participant interests. Research was provided to the participants



on subjects that included, but was not limited to, land use regulations, zoning ordinances, infrastructure requirements, attracting and balancing existing and new retail and commercial businesses, and the demographics of Green Cove Springs.

Throughout the summer's visioning meetings, focus areas of citizen interest were organized and subcommittees were developed to address each of these sub-areas. What initially was a long list of topics for the Tomorrow's Vision subcommittees to consider became, over the course of several meetings, a refined and streamlined list of the five main areas for further research.

In the late summer, the Tomorrow's Vision Committee held meetings that truly enumerated the scope and extent of the recommendations that were to serve as the blueprint for the future of Green Cove Springs. The five subcommittee reports were presented, with further refinement and explanation of recommended projects presented. There were several goals and priorities set by each of the subcommittees. These ranged from identifying possible sites for cellular towers, the costs for bricking streets, creating year round use of the Spring, ways to connect East-West pedestrian crossings and access to new businesses, reviewing height ordinances, parking incentives for improving curb appeal, developing a trail system related to the St. Johns River, reactivating the Community Redevelopment Agency, and an inventory of other plans for the future.



The Tomorrow's Vision Committee developed a strategy that includes both short and long term priorities that will further the mission statement of the committee. The redevelopment of the City of Green Cove Springs was seen as the overriding important goal for the future of this City. The high visibility of the City, given its location on US 17 and SR 16, demands that attention be spent on redevelopment of the major corridors in the city.

The following is a representative list of some of the goals/priorities identified by the Tomorrow's Vision Committee, organized under the above five subcommittees of the visioning sessions. The entire list of the goals/priorities is included in the appendix of this report.

Economic Development:

- Promote Green Cove Springs as a business friendly environment.
- Investigate use of the airport at Reynolds Park as a general aviation airport
- Promote restaurant business in downtown.
- Promote commercial development in Green Cove Springs
- Promote industrial development in Green Cove Springs.

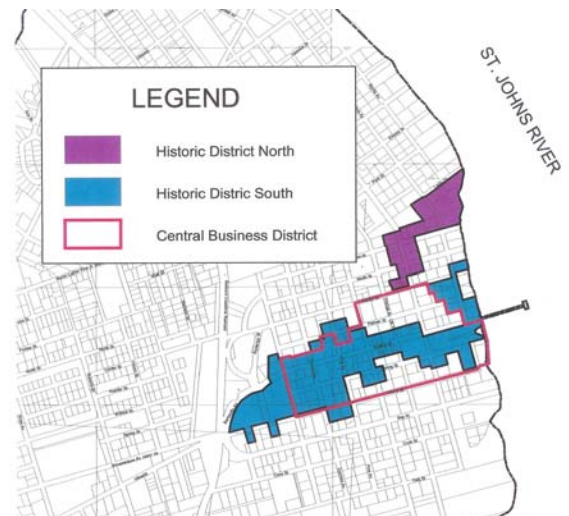


Infrastructure

- Investigate Green Cove Springs as a “Wireless City” and investigate possible sites for wireless towers.
- Determine if a CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency) would assist in financing the infrastructure needs.
- Restore brick streets, in selected areas of the City, such as the Central Business District, the Historic Districts, and the Gateways to the City.
- Develop street improvement plan and priorities for funding.
- Investigate selling of electric company.

Planning /Land Development

- Promote the development of a Green Cove Springs Truck Bypass Route.
- Adopt a historic preservation ordinance.
- Develop a streetscape plan with Landscape and Tree Requirements.
- Promote the development of the Beltway around Green Cove Springs.
- Design and adopt a Central Business District Parking Plan.





Recreation and Open Space

- Create year round use of the Green Cove Spring.
- Investigate developing a Community Center in Green Cove Springs and identify potential sites.
- Create gateways into the City on US 17, SR 16 and from the St. Johns River.
- Develop a Trail System throughout Green Cove Springs that connects to trail systems of Clay County.
- Identify funding sources for recreation improvements.

Redevelopment

- Strengthen code enforcement activities.
- Improve gateway signs into the city.
- Promote the redevelopment of the vacated car dealerships sites.
- Promote a “Clean-Up campaign for the City.
- Promote commercial development along Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
- Investigate the reactivation of the Community Redevelopment Agency.



Stakeholders Meeting

The goals/priorities developed by the Tomorrow’s Vision Committee were then ranked at subsequent meetings. The goals/priorities were presented by each subcommittee at a stakeholders meeting held on August 13, 2005. Over 100 citizens attended the stakeholders meeting. The goals were discussed and additional goals were added by the stakeholders.

Some of the goals added at the stakeholders meeting included:

- Promote Neighborhood Watch Programs throughout the City to assist in the reduction of crime
- Promote Affordable Housing
- Investigate the designation of a “Quiet Zone”.
- Expand medical facilities.



At the end of the meeting, the goals were ranked by the stakeholders. The ranking of the goals by the stakeholders generally reflected the same priorities as the Tomorrow’s Vision Committee.

Goals, Actions, and Implementation Measures

After the stakeholders meeting, the Tomorrow’s Vision Committee reviewed the priorities established by the stakeholders. The priorities were reorganized to promote their implementation and to reflect their relative priority from the stakeholders. General issue areas were identified. This process involved reorganizing the priorities into goals, actions, and implementation measures. The goals were general in nature and were the overriding areas that needed to be addressed to achieve the vision. The actions were more specific methods to achieve the goals. The implementation measures were specific ways to accomplish the actions.

The following are the goals, actions, and implementation measures recommended by the Tomorrow’s Vision Committee.

GOAL – Maintain the small town character of Green Cove Springs.

Action: Adopt a historic preservation ordinance.

Implementation Measures:

- Recommend to City Council to adopt a Historic Preservation ordinance.

Action: Develop Design Standards that illustrate Green Cove Springs’ character.

Implementation Measures:

- Promote Traditional Neighborhood Design standards.
- Restore brick streets in selected areas of the City.
- Examine traffic calming features for Green Cove Springs.
- Review higher densities and building heights for selected areas of the City.
- Create zoning overlay districts with development standards.
- Develop guidelines on the historical character of Green Cove Springs.

Other Recommended Implementation Measures:

- Investigate the designation of a railroad “Quiet Zone” and regulate train speeds through the City.
- Develop Neighborhood Watch programs.

GOAL – Provide Opportunities for Affordable Housing.

Action: ***Promote the availability of affordable housing.***

Implementation Measures:

- Create public/private partnerships, such as the Community Land Trust, to assist in the construction of affordable housing.
- Promote the renovation and rehabilitation of existing residential dwelling units.

GOAL – Promote the Redevelopment of the US 17/ SR 16 Corridors.

Action: ***Create gateways into the City on US 17 and SR 16, and promote the redevelopment of vacated car dealerships.***

Implementation Measures:

- Review permitted land uses along US 17 and SR 16.
- Design and adopt a Central Business District parking plan.
- Implement recommendations contained in the Downtown Redevelopment Manual, where relevant.
- Develop a pedestrian plan.
- Develop a streetscape plan with landscaping, tree requirement and building improvements.
- Promote the redevelopment of Brownfield sites.

GOAL – Improve the traffic circulation in and around Green Cove Springs.

Action: ***Promote the development of a Truck Bypass Route.***

Implementation Measures:

- Recommend City Council meet and work with the Florida Department of Transportation, First Coast MPO, Clay County, Northeast Florida Planning Council and the Saratoga Springs DRI developer to develop the truck bypass route.

Other Recommended Implementation Measures:

- Support the construction of a St. Johns River Crossing with an exit on the southern boundary of Green Cove Springs.
- Endorse the development of the Beltway around Green Cove Springs.
- Encourage mass transit and investigate the feasibility of a multi-modal station.
- Promote a connection between SR 16 East with SR 16 West.
- Investigate the development of the airport at Reynolds Park as a general aviation airport.

GOAL – Provide the Infrastructure to meet the needs of Green Cove Springs.

Action: Identify infrastructure needs and funding.

Implementation Measures:

- Develop an infrastructure needs plan.
- Develop funding sources for the implementation of the infrastructure needs plan.
- Investigate the reactivation of the Community Redevelopment Agency to assist in funding the proposed infrastructure needs.
- Research stormwater treatment options.
- Develop a street improvement plan.
- Determine the feasibility of selling the electric company and investigate ways of lowering electric rates.

Action: Investigate Green Cove Springs as a “Wireless City”.

Implementation Measures:

- Review location for towers.
- Research and identify best technology and guidelines for service.

Other Recommended Implementation Measures:

- Review possible sites for the relocation of the Police Department.
- Promote conservation of water and electricity through education.

GOAL – Expand Recreational opportunities for residents of, and visitors to, Green Cove Springs.

Action: Promote year round use of the Spring.

Implementation Measures:

- Implement the Spring Park Master Plan.
- Explore options for interactive water experiences/activities

Action: Investigate developing a community center.

Implementation Measures:

- Identify potential sites for the community center and potential funding sources.

Action: Provide incentives and opportunities for increased recreation activities.

Implementation Measures:

- Implement the Vera Francis Hall Park Master Plan.
- Identify a Blueway in and around Green Cove Springs.
- Develop an Interlocal agreement with Clay County for the county park facilities in Green Cove Springs.
- Promote the use of golf courses.
- Investigate the construction a skateboard park.

- Develop Eco-Heritage tours that would connect the St. Johns River to the Historical Triangle and other publicly held lands in the area.
- Develop a trail system that connects to the trails of Clay County.
- Create educational displays/kiosks at parks and historic properties.
- Increase pedestrian access to the St. Johns River.
- Explore the development of anchor spots in the St. Johns River.

GOAL – Promote a Business Friendly Environment in Green Cove Springs.

Action: Promote the development of a variety of business types, including offices, retail, commercial, and industrial development.

Implementation Measures:

- Promote Green Cove Springs as an “Entertainment Venue”.
- Promote Green Cove Springs as the “Downtown” of Clay County.
- Maintain the “Expedited Permitting Process” for development.
- Promote the development of restaurants in the Central Business District.
- Promote mixed-use development along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.
- Promote water-related businesses.
- Expand medical facilities.
- Promote a variety of lodging facilities from bed and breakfasts establishments to national chains.

Action: Coordinate Economic Development efforts with other regional entities.

Implementation Measures:

- Review the Clay Economic Development Plan and coordinate its implementation.

Other Implementation Measures:

- Be proactive with the media.
- Provide information about Green Cove Springs at local restaurants.

GOAL – Strengthen Code Enforcement.

Action: Promote ongoing code enforcement activities.

Implementation Measures:

- Improve the curb appeal of properties by providing incentives for improvements such as painting, landscaping, etc.
- Create a “Clean It Up” campaign for the City.
- Encourage the redevelopment of buildings with boarded up windows.
- Investigate appearance-based codes and promote their adoption.

Implementation of the Tomorrow's Vision Plan

The implementation of the Tomorrow's Vision Plan requires an approach that allows the City to move forward with those goals that are short term in nature while putting in place the larger financing structure to accomplish the long range plans. The committee met to prepare specific implementation measures. There was great input from all in attendance and the suggested measures promoted the implementation of the goals in the Tomorrow's Vision Plan. Specific suggested implementation measures suggested by the Tomorrow's Visions Committee are:

- Promote the use of monument signs.
- Encourage Mixed - Use designation.
- Allow for mixed land uses along US 17 that allows for residential uses on the second floor.
- Move utilities underground along Orange Avenue.
- Expand the boundaries of the existing Historic District.
- Develop a Martin Luther King Jr. Historic Trail that connect to a Reynolds Park Historic Trail.
- Promote Reynolds Park for development.
- Open Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to Orange Avenue.
- Add traffic signalization at the corner intersection created at Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. and Orange Avenue.
- Provide for streetscape improvements and lighting on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
- Promote angle parking on intersecting streets.
- Allow development of structures of 4-5 stories on Orange Avenue.



- Create safe zones for pedestrians
 - Maintain existing Landscape Regulations
 - Increase height limits on riverfront property, but maintain the 35' height maximum when adjacent to residential.
 - Set standards for streetlights.
 - Develop a Community Center on the CCAR property.
- Create welcoming gateways with 'Welcome' markers into the City at both ends of SR 17 & SR 16 and from the St. Johns River.
 - Set standards for plant material for along gateways and other city landscape with a minimum of 50% natural vegetation.
 - Create pedestrian greenscapes along right of ways with 6' of landscaping, 6' of sidewalk, 6' of landscaping and then the building to encourage pedestrian use and building streetscapes.
 - Expand the boundaries of the historic districts.

Over the years there has been much discussion about the infrastructure needs of the City. Some of these while planned for have not been funded. Others have grown out of the increased demands on the existing infrastructure by citizens. Still others are seen by the committee as upgrades to the City's infrastructure that will be the foundation for further investment and redevelopment.

One of the anchor pieces in any vision for a city mapping its future is the development of an economic development component to guide financial investment in the city for the future. The location of Green Cove Springs, within Clay County, just to the south of Jacksonville and Duval County, makes it a prime area for businesses that are interested in the northeast Florida area but also want a different quality of life than that within a large city. The competition for office and retail investment is high in these two counties and Green Cove Springs should be recognized as a competitive site. The challenges of infrastructure and the opportunities for investment can be balanced to give the City a consideration by those companies looking at this area.



The challenges of infrastructure and the opportunities for investment can be balanced to give the City a consideration by those companies looking at this area.

The final element of the Tomorrow's Vision Plan involves an aggressive and comprehensive plan to market one of the main attributes of Green Cove Springs, its location on the St. Johns River and its available open space. People are attracted to waterfronts everywhere in the state of Florida. Bays, rivers, springs, oceans and tidal marshes are all seen as a magnificent resource of this state. Access to those areas and the recreational opportunities that they provide are limited only by the level of creativity and investment of local citizens. Communities around the state are preserving open space waterfront areas for recreational use and thoughtful commercial enterprises that expand the citizen use of these precious areas.

Implementation Measures

The key to success of achieving the vision for Green Cove Springs developed by the Tomorrow's Vision Committee is identifying steps and the responsible entity required for implementation. Table 2 identifies the initial step for implementation and the responsible entity needed to achieve the goals established by the Tomorrow's Vision Committee. The funding column indicates if funding is required, beyond staff time, to fully implement the measure.

**Table 2
Implementation Measures**

Implementation Measures	Initial Step Required for Implementation	Responsible Entity	Funding Required?	Priority
Historic Preservation				
Historic Preservation ordinance	Ordinance Adoption with expanded boundaries	P & Z	No	1
Design Standards ⁽¹⁾				
Traditional Neighborhood Design standards.	Code Revision	P & Z	No	1
Brick streets in selected areas of the City.	Identify streets to be restored with brick	PW	Yes	2
Traffic calming features	Revise street standards	PW, P & Z	Yes	1
Higher densities and building heights for selected areas of the City.	Code Revision	P & Z	No	1
Zoning overlay districts with development standards.	Code Revision	P & Z	No	1
Guidelines on the historical character of Green Cove Springs	Guidelines Developed	P & Z	No	1
Create Gateways/Redevelopment				
Review permitted land uses along US 17 and SR 16.	Zoning Code Revision	P & Z	No	1
Central Business District parking plan.	Update Plan & Identify Parking Areas	P & Z PW	Yes	2
Implement Downtown Redevelopment Manual, where relevant.	Review Plan & Identify Relevant Areas	P & Z	Yes	2
Pedestrian plan.	Identify streets for sidewalk improvements	P & Z PW	Yes	2
Streetscape plan with landscaping, tree requirements, signage, and building improvements.	Develop streetscape plan	P & Z	Yes	1
Redevelopment of brownfield sites	Coordinate the brownfield initiative with Clay County	P & Z, Clay County Chamber	Yes	1

Implementation Measures	Initial Step Required for Implementation	Responsible Entity	Funding Required?	Priority
Develop Truck Bypass				
Facilitate the development the truck bypass route.	Meeting with FDOT, Clay County ,First Coast MPO, NEFPC	City Manager	No	2
Infrastructure Needs and Funding				
Infrastructure needs plan, include street, stormwater	Identify infrastructure needs and cost	PW	No	1
Potential funding sources	Identify funding available	City Mgr., PW and Finance	No	1
Community Redevelopment Area	Designate CRA	CC	No	1
Wireless City				
Cell tower locations	Identify locations	PW	No	2
Service guidelines and technology	Establish guidelines	IT Consultant	Yes	2
Year Round Use of the Spring				
Spring Park Master Plan.	Implement the Master Plan	CC	Yes	1
Interactive activities	Explore options	CC, Mer. Assoc	Yes	1
Community Center ⁽²⁾				
Develop Community Center	Identify sites and funding sources	City Mgr.	Yes	1
Increase Recreation Opportunities				
Increase use of golf courses		Private	No	1
Construction of a skateboard park.	Review need	City Mgr.	Yes	2
Vera Francis Hall Park Master Plan.	Implement the Master Plan	CC	Yes	1
Blueway Trail	Designate Blueway	P & Z	No	2
Eco-Heritage tours	Conduct inventory	His. Soc., Mer. Assoc.	No	2
Trail system ⁽³⁾	Adopt Trail Map	P & Z CC	No	2
Educational displays/kiosks at parks and historic properties.	Develop displays	His. Soc	Yes	3
Pedestrian access to the St. Johns River.	Maintain open right of ways	PW	Yes	On-going

Implementation Measures	Initial Step Required for Implementation	Responsible Entity	Funding Required?	Priority
Develop plan for anchor spots in the St. Johns River.	Identify locations	P & Z	Yes	3
Affordable Housing				
Public/private partnerships to assist in the construction of affordable housing.	Identify potential programs	Public Housing	*	On-going
Renovation and rehabilitation of existing residential dwelling units.	Identify potential programs	P & Z	*	On-going
Business Development				
Promote Green Cove Springs as the “Downtown” of Clay County.	Develop marketing campaign	CC, Mer. Assoc. & Clay County Chamber		1
“Expedited Permitting Process” for development.	Continue or improve process	P & Z		On-going
Development of restaurants in the Central Business District.	Develop marketing campaign	Mer. Assoc. & Clay Co. Chamber		2
Mixed Use development along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.	Extend MLK to Orange Avenue	City Mgr.		1
Water-related businesses.	Develop marketing campaign	Mer. Assoc. & Clay County Chamber		2
Expand medical facilities.	Develop marketing campaign & support applications	Clay County Chamber		2
Promote lodging facilities.	Develop marketing campaign	Mer. Assoc. & Clay County Chamber		1
Coordinate Economic Development				
Clay Economic Development Plan.	Coordinate Implementation	P & Z		2
Code Enforcement				
Curb Appeal Incentives	Develop Incentive program	P & Z		2
“Clean It Up” campaign	Develop marketing campaign	PW		1

Description of Priority Ranking included in Table 2

Priority 1 - Initial step to be accomplished in 2006. Ordinances adopted within 6 months

Priority 2 - Initial step to be accomplished in 2007- 2008

Priority 3 - Initial step to be accomplished after 2008

Specific Recommendations to Implement Actions included in Table 2

The following are recommendations related to specific actions included in Table 2 .

- (1) Design Guidelines
 - Monument Signs
 - Mixed Land Use
 - Underground Utilities on Orange Avenue (US 17)
 - Angle Parking
 - 4 to 5 story construction on Orange Avenue
 - Increase maximum building heights for Riverfront property
 - Welcome signs on SR 16 and US 17
 - Streetlights standard
 - Low maintenance landscape materials to be determined in coordination with University of Florida
- (2) Community Center
 - CCAR Property
- (3) Trails
 - Historic Trail – Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. to Reynolds Park

Abbreviations used in Table 2

- CC – City Council
- City Mgr - . City Manager
- P & Z – Planning and Zoning
- PW – Public Works
- Mer. Assoc. – Green Cove Springs Merchants Association
- His. Soc. – Clay County Historical Society

Other Implementation Measures	Initial Step Required for Implementation
Investigate the designation of a railroad “Quiet Zone” and regulate train speeds though the City.	Apply to FRA for designation
Develop Neighborhood Watch programs.	Develop Community Program
Support the construction of a St. Johns River Crossing with an exit in Green Cove Springs.	City Council Resolution
Endorse the development of the Beltway around Green Cove Springs.	City Council Resolution
Encourage mass transit and investigate the feasibility of a multi-modal station.	Recommend to First Coast MPO
Promote a connection between SR 16 East with SR 16 West.	Recommend to First Coast MPO

Other Implementation Measures	Initial Step Required for Implementation
Investigate the development of the airport at Reynolds Park as a general aviation airport.	Develop plan with Reynolds Park
Review possible sites for the relocation of the Police Department.	Identify potential sites
Promote conservation of water and electricity through education.	Distribute available information
Be proactive with the media.	Send press releases to the local newspapers
Provide information about Green Cove Springs at local restaurants.	Distribute print materials to local businesses
Promote redevelopment of buildings with boarded up windows.	Provide incentives for redevelopment
Appearance-based codes.	Prepare and adopt ordinance

Funding

Once submitted and approved by the City Council, Green Cove Springs will truly begin the work on the roadmap for Tomorrow's Vision. The funding of these various projects and initiatives will be the next challenge for a community with one of the lowest millage rates in northeast Florida. The 2005-2006 millage rate of 2.2 will make implementation of these goals challenging. This millage rate has remained constant in the City for over 20 years. It will be difficult for this millage rate to generate enough funds necessary for the many infrastructure plans recommended in the Tomorrow's Vision Plan. Those existing funding sources that Green Cove Springs has used in the past will need to be expanded to include a variety of new sources.

Many communities have used a dedicated funding source, often for a short period of time, to generate the financial level of support necessary for these kinds of City undertakings. Nearby Jacksonville, Florida used a one-cent tax to fund its Better Jacksonville Plan for several infrastructure programs. Green Cove Springs may want to evaluate such a plan combined with a community wide citizen ranking of projects to be completed. This approach has been used in other jurisdictions and allows some public input.

Currently, the taxable base of Green Cove Springs is \$283,543,296. Each mill will generate \$283,543 for infrastructure. The current estimate of the Center Street Drainage Project is a little over \$2,000,000. The reactivation of the Community Redevelopment Agency could assist in the funding of projects generated by the Tomorrow's Vision Committee. If the City Council officially designates one or more Community Redevelopment Areas, the City could receive the 8.85 mills assessed by Clay County for any increase property value in the designated areas.

While millage rates are a difficult item to increase with public approval, all sources of revenue must be examined for the implementation of a plan of this magnitude. It will be important to explore a variety of funding sources for both infrastructure and economic development plans for a vision of this magnitude. Grants and fund underwriting for various public infrastructure programs will be important to furthering the goals set forward in the Tomorrow's Vision Plan.

The following are potential funding sources to assist in the implementation of the Tomorrow's Vision Plan.

- The Florida Communities Trust Program is a land acquisition grant program that provides funding to local governments and eligible non-profit environmental organizations for acquisition of community based parks, open space and greenways that further outdoor recreation and natural protection needs identified in local comprehensive plans. The acquisition of the Green Cove Springs Nature Preserve was funded by a \$2,625,000 grant from the Florida Communities Trust program. The City was able to receive these funds with no match to obtain state grant funds.
- The Florida Front Porch program is a designation that communities can receive through a competitive process. The designation allows communities to receive bonus points when applying for grants and funding from other state agencies. The designation is based on community revitalization efforts, demonstrated ability to organize residents and local businesses, partnership development and the support of local government.
- The Department of Environmental Protection, within the Office of Greenways & Trails has a program called the Recreational Trails Program. This competitive grant program helps to develop recreational trails as has been suggested by the committee. The linkages suggested in the visioning plan may be a match for this funding source. The matching requirement is variable from a low of twenty percent (20%) to a high of fifty percent (50%) matching funds required.
- The Bikes Belong Coalition is another small grant program that is administered in conjunction with private bike manufacturers. This organization is looking to increase the recreational opportunities for cyclists and can be linked to the development of bike paths and trails within a community. Usually grants are awarded for \$10,000 and, in limited cases, over this amount. No matching funds are required.
- The Florida Main Street America Program is a program that encourages economic development within the context of historic preservation. The grant for the consulting services needed to initiate this program is administered by the state's partner in this program, the National Main Street Center of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The four areas of improvement to downtowns are the organization of the private and public sector, the promotion of and marketing of an area through public events and public relations, encouraging quality building rehabilitation, design, and appearance of the downtown. Economic restructuring is also encouraged through strengthening existing business, attracting new business and supporting the development of second floor vacancies.
- The Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Arts programs are grant organizations to fund programs in communities and require a dollar for dollar match. These grants may be used for bringing exhibits to a community or supporting a cultural event as part of a larger economic development effort. Many of the grants do not require matching funds depending on the size and purpose of the grant. Clay County applied for a \$1,500 grant, which was funded in full during 2005.

- The creation of a Business Improvement District would allow much of the same funding for specific projects in a designated area as a Community Redevelopment Agency.
- The Art in Public Places Project is to enhance the quality of the visual environment in the community, both natural and constructed. With this in mind, the usual commitment by the community is to provide one percent (1%) of the construction or renovation cost of all public capital facility projects towards the acquisition and installation of public art. Such capital facility projects include libraries, fire stations and parks, among others. Usually a public art advisory board is developed to be responsible for recommending the commissions of new works of art, the acquisition of existing works of art, the selection of artists to work as member of design teams, and the review of loaned and/or donated works of art. This has been very successful throughout the state in both large cities and small communities. It is recommended that this program be in place before the start of any significant infrastructure development in order to capture every dollar available.
- The Public Welfare Foundation supports groups that provide services to disadvantaged populations and those working for lasting improvements in meeting basic human needs. The foundation makes grants in the areas of community and economic development, criminal justice, disadvantaged elderly people and youths, environment, health, human rights, population, and technology assistance. Most grants range from \$25,000 to \$50,000 and may be for general operating support, particularly at smaller organizations. In 2005, \$2.5 million dollars were granted for community development projects. The Public Welfare Foundation is interested in grassroots community organizations that are looking for ways to increase public participation in their community. Many grants are given to support basic operating costs of non-profits. There is no matching financial requirement from the applicant.

APPENDIX

Tomorrow's Vision Goals By Subcommittee Ranked by Tomorrow's Vision Committee – August 8, 2005

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Be proactive with the media in order to promote Green Cove Springs
- Promote Commercial development in Green Cove Springs
- Promote Industrial development in Green Cove Springs
- Promote Lodging development in Green Cove Springs
- Promote Restaurant business in downtown
- Review the impact of By-Pass Roads on the City
- Involve the property owners in the Vision Process
- Obtain input from the property owners on the plans for their property
- Revisit land uses on US 17 & SR 16
- Limit car dealerships and other undesirable uses on US 17
- Promote Architectural Design Standards that illustrate Green Cove Springs identity

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Determine the cost of brick streets
- Restore brick streets
- Develop plan to increase capacity of water system
- Develop streets improvement plan
- Investigate feasibility of selling electric company
- Investigate the future of the police department
- Explore stormwater treatment options
- Identify infrastructure required for build out of vacant property and property in need of redevelopment
- Develop 5-yr plan for infrastructure needed for development and redevelopment
- Assist the City in identifying funding sources for funding the infrastructure
- Determine if a CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency) would assist in financing the infrastructure needs
- Promote Conservation of Resources, i.e. water and electricity through education
- Examine the cost of second water meter used for irrigation
- Identify use of existing facilities
- Identify wireless tower sites
- Examine ways of lowering electric rates

PLANNING/LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

- Adopt historic preservation ordinance
- Design and Adopt a Central Business District Parking Plan
- Provide incentives for Appearance based regulations
- Develop a streetscape plan with Landscape and Tree Requirements
- Create Zoning Overlay districts with Development Standards
- Develop Guidelines on Historical Character of Green Cove Springs
- Adopt a recommendation for a route for the St. Johns River Crossing that has an exit in Green Cove Springs
- Promote the development of the Beltway around Green Cove Springs
- Study Traffic Patterns in Green Cove Springs
- Investigate Traffic calming features in the city that reduce speeds
- Improve the Entrance to Green Cove Springs
- Promote the connection of SR 16 East with SR16 West
- Improve pedestrian access in and around the city and the natural features within Green Cove Springs
- Review the Signage Ordinance
- Provide incentives for improved signs
- Review previous studies and implement recommendations, such as ones included in the Downtown Redevelopment Manual
- Review higher densities and heights in some areas of the City

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

- Promote River and Creek usage by canoes with recreation/ecotourism tours
- Expand Vera Francis Hall Park
- Promote River and Creek Usage
- Identify a Blueway in Green Cove Springs
- Identify funding sources for recreation improvements
- Develop Eco-heritage tour that connects the St. Johns River to the Historical Triangle
- Develop educational displays to be placed at parks and historic properties
- Provide word friendly/user friendly signs
- Develop Trail System
- Create Welcome Areas
 - US 17 South
 - SR 16
 - From the River
- Secure Anchor Spots
- Investigate a Community Center and identify sites
- Promote development that increases leisure pursuits
- Encourage the establishment of a Sports Complex in Clay County
- Develop interlocal agreements with Clay County for the county park facilities in Green Cove Springs

REDEVELOPMENT

- Reactivate the Community Redevelopment Agency
- Maintain the small town character of Green Cove Springs
- Promote Commercial development along Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
- Promote Restaurant business in downtown
- Promote redevelopment of car dealership sites
- Improve Gateway sign into the city
- Investigate use of the airport at Reynolds Park as a airport for corporate flights
- Strengthen code enforcement activities
- Provide landscaping along US 17
- Promote a “Clean It Up” campaign
- Promote redevelopment of sites with boarded up windows
- Improve curb appeal and provide incentives for improved curb appeal
- Investigate appearance codes and enforcement of appearance codes
- Identify key areas for improvement and target areas for improvement, such as all four corners of the SR 16 & US 17 intersections
- Promote streetscape improvements that provide landscaping and awnings on the buildings
- Evaluate set back requirements moving buildings closer to street
- Evaluate the tree ordinance for its impact on redevelopment
- Provide information about Green Cove Springs at local restaurants

Tomorrow's Vision Goals
Ranked by Stakeholders -August13, 2005

Listed in Rand Order
(Goals below the double line received not votes)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Promote Green Cove Springs as an Entertainment Venue.
- Promote Green Cove Springs as the “Downtown” of Clay County.
- Promote a business friendly environment.
- Promote Commercial development, both offices and retail in Green Cove Springs.
- Promote Industrial development in Green Cove Springs.
- Promote water related businesses that takes advantage of the St. Johns River.
- Maintain an “Expedited Permitting Process” for development within the City.
- Expand Medical Facilities in GCS.
- Promote Lodging development in Green Cove Springs.
- Investigate Multi-Modal Station / Mass Transit.
- Investigate the development of a River Taxi.
- Promote Restaurant business in downtown.
- Review the Clay Economic Development Plan and coordinate its implementation.
- Coordinate Economic Development activities with Regional Efforts, especially with their efforts related to the military and the reopening of Cecil Field.
- Investigate use of the airport at Reynolds Park as a general aviation airport.
- =====
- Be proactive with the media in order to promote Green Cove Springs.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Develop funding sources for the implementation of the plan to increase capacity of water, wastewater and electric system.
- Determine if a CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency) would assist in financing the infrastructure needs.
- Investigate feasibility of selling electric company and ways of lowering electric rates.
- Review the location of the Police Department and possible sites for relocation.
- Investigate Green Cove Springs as a “Wireless City” and investigate possible sites for wireless towers.
- Restore brick streets in selected areas of the City, such as the Central Business District (CBD), the Historic Districts, and the Gateways to the City.
- Identify infrastructure required for build-out of vacant property and property in need of redevelopment and develop a plan to fund the needed improvements.
- Explore stormwater treatment options.
- Promote Conservation Water and Electricity Usage through education.
- Develop street improvement plan and priorities for funding.
- Investigate the future of the Police Department and possible consolidation with the Sheriff’s Department.

PLANNING/ TRANSPORTATION

- Promote the availability of workforce/affordable housing.
- Promote the development of a Green Cove Springs Truck Bypass Route.
- Adopt historic preservation ordinance.
- Promote Architectural Design Standards that illustrate Green Cove Springs' character.
- Design and Adopt a Central Business District Parking Plan.
- Review permitted land uses on US 17 & SR 16.
- Investigate the designation of a Railroad Quiet Zone in Green Cove Springs and the speed of trains travel through the City.
- Promote the Construction of the St. Johns River Crossing that will have an exit in Green Cove Springs.
- Review higher densities and heights in selected areas of the City.
- Study Traffic Patterns in Green Cove Springs and investigate traffic calming features in the City that reduce speeds.
- Promote the development of the Beltway around Green Cove Springs.
- Promote Traditional Neighborhood Design.
- Review the Signage Ordinance.
- Develop a streetscape plan with Landscape and Tree Requirements.
- Review setback requirements in the Land Development Regulations and the potential reduction of setback requirement to allow buildings to be closer to street.
- Create Zoning Overlay districts with Development Standards.
- Develop Guidelines on Historical Character of Green Cove Springs.

PLANNING/ TRANSPORTATION

- Review previous studies and implement recommendations, such as ones included in the Downtown Redevelopment Manual.
- Provide incentives for Appearance based regulations.
- Promote the connection of SR 16 East with SR16 West.
- Develop a wayfinding program that promotes pedestrian access in and around the city, and to the natural features within Green Cove Springs.
- Evaluate the tree ordinance for its impact on redevelopment.

REDEVELOPMENT

- Investigate the reactivation of the Community Redevelopment Agency.
- Strengthen code enforcement activities.
- Promote the redevelopment of the vacated car dealerships sites.
- Promote neighborhood Watch Program to assist in the reduction of crime.
- Maintain the small town character of Green Cove Springs.
- Promote commercial development along Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
- Improve curb appeal by providing incentives for improvements of property, such as painting, landscaping, etc.
- Develop a pedestrian friendly plan for area prime for redevelopment.
- Promote a “Clean - Up” campaign.
- Improve gateway signs into the City.
- Promote redevelopment of sites with boarded up windows.
- Promote Water-related business that promotes the St. Johns River.
- Investigate appearance codes and promote their adoption.
- Promote streetscape improvements that provide landscaping and awnings on the buildings.
- Identify key areas for improvement and target areas for improvement, such as along the major corridors of SR 16 & US 17.

- Promote a variety of restaurant businesses in the downtown area.
- Provide information about Green Cove Springs at local restaurants.

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

- Create year round use of the Green Cove Spring.
 - Investigate developing a Community Center in Green Cove Springs and identify potential sites.
 - Create gateways into the City on US 17, SR 16 and from the St. Johns River.
 - Promote businesses and development that increases recreation opportunities for residents and employees and provide incentives for providing the recreation opportunities.
 - Expand recreational opportunities for residents of Green Cove Springs.
 - Investigate locating a skateboard park in Green Cove Springs.
 - Promote the use of the golf courses in Green Cove Springs.
 - Implement the Vera Francis Hall Park Master Plan.
 - Identify a Blueway in Green Cove Springs.
 - Explore the development of Anchor Spots in the St. Johns River.
 - Develop Trail System throughout Green Cove Springs that connects to trail system of Clay County.
 - Identify funding sources for recreation improvements.
 - Develop Eco-heritage tour that connects the St. Johns River to the Historical Triangle and all other publicly held lands in the Green Cove Springs area.
 - Develop interlocal agreements with Clay County for the county park facilities in Green Cove Springs.
 - Increase pedestrian access to the St. Johns River.
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- Promote River and Creek usage by canoes with recreation/ecotourism tours.
 - Encourage the establishment of a Sports Complex in Clay County.
 - Develop educational displays to be placed at parks and historic properties with word friendly/user friendly signs and informational kiosk.

BROWNFIELDS INITIATIVE

Tomorrow's Vision recognizes the Greater Green Cove Springs Brownfield initiative as an important redevelopment tool with a common goal for community-wide revitalization. A brownfield is generally an abandoned, idled, or under-used industrial or commercial property where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by actual or perceived environmental concerns.

The City of Green Cove Springs established and formally designated brownfield areas within the city on March 1, 2005. Moreover, Tomorrow's Vision Committee fully supports brownfield redevelopment to help promote economic benefits such as an expanded tax base, increased investment, job creation, and enhanced property values as well as historic preservation of Green Cove Springs. In addition, the reuse of brownfield areas provides the opportunity to use existing infrastructure, foster a vibrant community characterized by a mix of uses, appropriate density, transportation/housing choice, recreational and park areas, as well as neighborhood centers/institutions. Coordination of brownfield redevelopment is integrated in Tomorrow's Vision priorities and implementation measures.

Historic Preservation
Gateways/Redevelopment
Community Center
Recreation Opportunities
Business Development
Economic Development

LIST OF TERMS

The following are some of the terms used in the Tomorrow's Vision Report

CRA- Community Redevelopment Agency
CBD-Central Business District
CCUA – Clay County Utility Authority
FCT – Florida Communities Trust
FRDAP – Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program
GCS – Green Cove Springs
SR – State Road
US – United States

LIST OF RESOURCES

The following are some of the resources used by the Tomorrow's Vision Committee:

CBD Parking Plan
FCT Grant for GCS Nature Preserve
FRDAP Grants for Spring Park and Vera Francis Hall Park
Spring Park Master Plan
Vera Francis Hall Park Master Plan
Augusta Savage Master Plan
Green Cove Springs Nature Preserve Management Plan
Historic Preservation Ordinance
Historic District Maps
Comprehensive Plan
Green Cove Springs Land Use Map