

# 2012 Annual Awards Program

## Program Excellence Awards Nomination Form

**Deadline for Nominations: March 16, 2012**

Complete this form (sections 1 and 2) and submit with your descriptive narrative.

### SECTION 1: Information About the Nominated Program

Program Excellence Award Category (*select only one*):

- Community Health and Safety
- Community Partnership
- Community Sustainability
- Strategic Leadership and Governance

Name of program being nominated: DeLand 2050

Jurisdiction(s) where program originated: City of DeLand, FL

Jurisdiction population(s): 24,944

Please indicate the month and year in which the program you are nominating was fully implemented. (Note: All Program Excellence Award nominations must have been fully implemented by or before January 31, 2011, to be eligible. The start date should not include the initial planning phase.)

Month: March Year: 2010

Name(s) and title(s) of individual(s) who should receive recognition for this award at the ICMA Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona, October 2012. (Each individual listed MUST be an ICMA member to be recognized.):

Name: Michael Pleus

Title: City Manager Jurisdiction: City of DeLand

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Jurisdiction: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Jurisdiction: \_\_\_\_\_

## **SECTION 2: Information About the Nominator/Primary Contact**

Name of contact: Michael Grebosz

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# DeLand 2050

## Program Development

Last decade, the City chose to pursue a goal of becoming a sustainable community. One of the means to become sustainable, a community's land use pattern must also be restructured away from the typical urban sprawl pattern. Because planning for such large issues can take years to change the mindset that created the existing development pattern, the City wanted to go beyond the typical 10 or 20 year planning horizon.

In order to plan for the future, participants from a variety of sectors, geographic areas, and perspectives shaped and guided this effort, including primary, secondary and higher education institutions, local government, business, nonprofits, health care, media, and the faith community. The individuals who made up the original survey committee were in key community leadership positions. They served as assistant planners and overseers of the organizational structure, financial resources, consultants, and logistics of what became DeLand 2050.

All participants agreed that a visioning process was necessary due to numerous forces and changes occurring across the national that were potentially irreversible and detrimental. These forces include declining unemployment, large numbers of high school dropouts, and lack of development in the nearby Spring Hill community and the subsequent loss of open space. The City of DeLand came to an understanding that addressing these and other challenges would require coordination and support beyond that available from volunteers.

As the planning process began, the committee determined that other important stakeholder groups also needed to be represented. They recruited and engaged additional

community members from across the City of DeLand. The City of DeLand and the committee rallied community support for the work. People with insight know one vital secret: the future is what you make of it, and tomorrow is the sum of today. Sensible individuals and united communities often overcome present day problems to lay the ground work for future prosperity and success.

### Program Implementation

Implementation of the DeLand 2050: Vision for the City of DeLand depends on participation and collaboration between multiple functions of City government, encouraging the infusion of innovative ideas from all levels through a partnership approach. *DeLand 2050 Vision* leaders selected a process that went beyond a typical economic development or strategic planning process. Instead, community leaders devised a visioning process that would be more comprehensive in scope. They pursued a method that would both engage community members to participate in and learn from the planning process, and give leaders and the entire community a better sense of how “just plain folks” view the current and future state of their community.

This approach enabled the entire community to participate in co-creating a plan for the future rather than having only traditional leaders or organizations set the community’s goals. This more holistic approach focused on both outlining a vision for the future *and* building capacity of the community to realize its vision. It emphasized community and economic development rather than only traditional economic or industrial development and is consistent with what research has shown is vital to community change efforts. The City of DeLand understands by working together is a means to create and capture community spirit by supporting local government, local businesses and the community. DeLand can only meet these challenges by working together with local citizens, communities, businesses, and adopting a

developmental approach. DeLand 2050 vision will give an opportunity for its citizens and residents in the unincorporated area to participate in the decision-making process and to have a voice in their government.

### Program Outcome

After all the forums, planning sessions and community engagement the DeLand 2050 vision was established and the following objects were outlined:

- **A Strong Sense of Community:** All residents of DeLand and its surrounding communities are integral members of a broader community and will be involved in activities to contribute to its betterment. Local, county and state governments will be responsive to the needs and desires of the community. Achieving this vision of the 2050 Plan can strengthen our local economy, improve the health of our environment and contribute to the durability and flexibility of our social fabric.
- **Planning For Progress and The Future Together:** Public involvement that includes the incorporated sectors of the City of DeLand as well as the unincorporated sectors of the county that lie within the DeLand's extraterritorial jurisdiction and within the City's future utility service area is vital. Too often, plans are created that address only the areas within a town's or city's corporate limits without taking into consideration the impacts of growth and development and related decisions occurring in the adjoining areas of adjacent jurisdictions. By creating a plan for the larger area, the citizens in the incorporated and unincorporated areas can work together to create a coordinated plan. Input from these stakeholders will be used to shape, plan and prioritize recommended implementation strategies that are in keeping with the community's goal for future development.

- **Policy and Procedures:** The City of DeLand will also support other operational frameworks, including managing for results, to institutionalize sustainable practices as a part of how the City does business.
- **Sense-Of-Place:** Majority of respondents indicated that the small town atmosphere, lifestyle, convenience, and scale of buildings were the most important qualities. The protection of these qualities was foremost in all comments received.
- **Green/Open Space:** Should be located in the urban core, as well as transition areas and beyond. Protecting natural areas and open space both inside and outside urban areas was listed throughout the comments. Landscaping and tree protection were also important.
- **Downtown:** Both the businesses & the historic district should be protected and the area promoted as a key component of the DeLand region. Many comments concerning the downtown included preference for the special events which included parades.
- **Sprawl:** was mentioned fairly often and most comments leaned towards reducing new development far away from the existing developed areas. New development in the core area was the preferred location and in select centers for higher intensity.
- **Infill Development:** Respondents were suggesting that new growth should be encouraged to locate in the existing developed areas through infill of undeveloped lands and the reuse or better use of existing buildings. Creation of mixed-use developments was preferred to the standard single use projects.
- **Creating Connectivity:** Respondents wanted to allow people the ability to move between major developments without necessarily entering the major road network. Completing sidewalks & trails between destinations and neighborhoods; thus creating walkable destinations.

## Program Lessons

The DeLand 2050 project shows that a progressive and collaborative path can be forged even though there are vastly differing interests in the community. This collaborative community effort shows that stakeholders from all areas truly want great things for the city and its citizens.

## Conclusion

DeLand faces great challenges in these economical and difficult times. It is serious about its responsibility to provide services that meet the needs of the citizens in our communities in a cost-effective and affordable manner. One of the strengths of long term integrated development planning is that it involves the community in the development, delivery, and democracy in working together with local citizens and partners.

DeLand is committed to “work with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives.” DeLand can only meet these challenges by working together with local citizens, communities, businesses, and adopting a developmental approach.