



TLG and LMC 2016 Case Study Application
Future Ready Communities



DUE: September 4, 2015

Email to: Ryan Spillers at rspillers@transformgov.org

COVER PAGE

- Case Study Title: One Community's Continuous and Measurable Improvements to Livability and Sustainability
- Case Study Category (Select only one, selection identified by highlighting your choice):

Planning for Your Future

Creating an Inclusive Community

Reinventing Local Government

Community Networks

Blinders

- Jurisdiction Name: City of Palm Bay, Florida
- Jurisdiction Population (US Census): 104,898 (U.S Census Estimate 2013)
- Would you like the application to be considered for our Rapid Fire Session? (Rapid Fire presentations are fast-paced, entertaining, interactive presentations. Each jurisdiction will have five minutes to make their presentations using 15 PPT slides set on auto-forward primarily containing photos/graphics. Participants will be seated at round tables to facilitate an energetic idea exchange. A cash bar will be available.)

YES

NO

- Project Leader (Primary Contact for case study notification):
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List additional presenters contact information below:

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Outreach Coordinator, Karyn Barber- Karyn.barber@pbfl.org

1. Presentation title and description of the innovation. *100 word maximum.*

Title: One Community's Continuous and Measurable Improvements to Livability and Sustainability.

The STAR (Sustainable Tools for Assessing and Rating) Community Rating System is the nation's first voluntary, self-reporting framework for evaluating, quantifying and improving the livability and sustainability of U.S. Communities. In May 2015, Palm Bay was the first city in Florida to be certified as a STAR Community, earning a 3-STAR rating in recognition of the City's sustainability leadership.

2. When and how was the program, policy or initiative originally conceived in your jurisdiction? *100 word maximum.*

In 2009, Palm Bay addressed sustainability issues by developing an Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy (EECS). Then in 2010, a Sustainability Master Plan was developed to guide the community's commitment to the environment, economic health, and improved quality of life for residents. In 2013, the City began working to find a way to comprehensively measure its overall sustainability efforts and determined that a collaborative effort within the community was needed. Palm Bay identified STAR as a program that would help meet this need and in early 2014, Palm Bay was one of twenty cities selected to participate in the inaugural STAR program.

3. How exactly is the program or policy innovative? How has your innovation changed previous processes, products or services? *100 word maximum.*

Through the STAR menu-based rating system, Palm Bay was able to select the measures and objectives that most closely aligned with the current sustainability efforts. At the completion of the year-long evaluation, STAR awarded the most points to Palm Bay in those categories focusing on Social Capital, followed by Environmental Stewardship, and finally Economic Prosperity. The data collected through STAR has broadened the City's perspective regarding sustainability and how it relates to Palm Bay. The STAR roadmap has provided areas to focus on for future sustainability efforts.

4. Explain how the program or initiative substantially stretched or improved the boundaries of ordinary governmental operations. *200 word maximum.*

STAR's rating criteria is designed to assess communities' sustainability efforts in a clear, objective, data-driven way. The rating system encompasses economic, environmental, and social performance measures (commonly known as triple bottom line sustainability decision criteria) for both local governments and the broader community. In order to achieve this, a requirement for the STAR program is the partnership of local government with private and public agencies. The goal is that these partnerships will help promote a holistic vision for the City. STAR encourages communities to form collaborative relationships with local government, schools, businesses, industry, medical institutions, financial institutions, community groups and others to share in the impact of sustainability. Government agencies will make policies to drive sustainability goals but without the body of the community these practices and policies defeat the principle of sustainability.

5. What individuals or groups are considered the primary initiators of your program? How does the innovation engage stakeholders or demonstrate high performance teaming? Were strategic partnerships and/or community networks developed as a result of the innovation? *200 word maximum.*

The City of Palm Bay Green Team was established in 2010, as a part of the City of Palm Bay's Sustainability Master Plan. Chaired by the Deputy City Manager, the Green Team is composed of City staff from multiple departments. In 2014, when STAR announced Palm Bay as one of 20 U.S. cities, towns and counties selected to participate, the Green Team took the lead in completing the year-long data collection and application process.

As part of the STAR program requirements; the Green Team coordinated data collection from outside agencies and community partners. Community relationships and partnerships provided an opportunity for the City and its residents to share resources and communicate behaviors that will strengthen the onward movement toward sustainable growth. Throughout the year-long verification process, the City of Palm Bay cultivated joint efforts with over 40 organizational partnerships, thereby engaging community partners in a new way. The STAR assessment tools aided in establishing new activities and sharing of information not previously captured regarding the well-being of the community. These activities have allowed agencies to collectively leverage resources for the benefit of the community.

6. If a private consultant was used please describe their involvement, identify the consultant and/or firm and provide contact information. *100 word maximum.*

Palm Bay municipal government began implementing the STAR Community Program in 2014. Municipal government employees along with partnering organizations have been solely responsible for attaining a STAR Community Rating - objectively improving, measurably and continuously, the livability and sustainability of the City. Guidance for use of the STAR road mapping tools was provided through the STAR Communities programs and liaisons.

STAR Communities

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7. To what extent do you believe your program or policy initiative is potentially replicable within other jurisdictions and why? To your knowledge, have any other jurisdictions or organizations established programs or implemented policies modeled specifically on this project? Please provide verification of the replication. *200 word maximum.*

STAR Communities is a program available throughout North America. This program is designed to be a guide to assist communities in the process of evaluating their sustainability efforts and to share the story of their transition to a sustainable community. The City of Palm Bay chose to utilize the STAR Communities program because it can be replicated

in any size community that chooses to focus on a preferred future. The primary applicant for STAR certification must be a local government. Other community partners, organizations, universities, consultants and federal agencies can become STAR affiliates to support a STAR community's mission. Communities participating in STAR are diverse in size, geography, and demographics. Currently communities reporting to STAR are as large as Toronto, ON; Houston, TX; Broward County, FL; and Phoenix, AZ and communities as small as Indianola, IA; Charles City, IA; Steamboat Spring and Nederland, CO.

8. What were the costs? What were the savings? *100 word maximum.*

The City of Palm Bay has spent approximately \$25,000 towards developing and working towards the STAR Community rating.

The benefits and savings as a result of the STAR program are mostly intangible. Palm Bay found improved livability and sustainability of the City to be the largest benefit.

9. Please describe the most significant obstacle(s) encountered thus far by your program. How have they been dealt with? Which ones remain? *200 word maximum.*

The most significant obstacles Palm Bay encountered through this process have been developing partnerships with outside agencies, managing and dedicating staff to the program, and keeping the steering committee or "Green Team" inspired. The "Green Team" is comprised of City employees from various departments whose main job functions often take priority over tracking sustainability efforts. These employees have to be reminded of the value of the efforts in sustainability leadership and how it can be integrated into their daily activities rather than treated as additional work. The City has also identified several organizations in the community that are meeting goals within the City's Sustainability Master Plan and STAR program objectives; however, these outside agencies are not fully utilizing available programming or tracking the data needed to provide objective evidence of improved performance. The City has tasked its "Green Team" to reach out to these agencies to gather additional data and to inform them about our mission to obtain a 4-STAR Community rating in the future.

10. What outcomes did this program or policy have? What baseline data did you collect? How did you measure the change based on the intervention, and why do you believe in the credibility of this assessment? *200 word maximum.*

As a result of the City's efforts in sustainability leadership and following the roadmap provided by STAR Communities Palm Bay has made continuous strides toward our sustainability goals. Through the year-long process, Palm Bay and its community partners collected data pertaining to sustainability efforts from existing organizations, projects and programs that have taken place for at least three years or more prior to 2014.

The STAR rating system is broken down into 7 goal areas, 44 objectives, 526 indicators and a total of 720 points possible. At the completion of the year-long evaluation, STAR awarded the most points to Palm Bay in the goal areas focusing on Education, Arts & Community, followed by Climate & Energy, and finally Economy & Jobs.

The credibility in this assessment comes from the fact that through the STAR menu-based rating system the City of Palm Bay was able to select the measures and objectives that most closely aligned with the current sustainability efforts. In all, Palm Bay was able to

utilize the STAR roadmap and partnerships within the community to complete several successful projects that were both socially and economically beneficial.

11. Has the program received any press or other media coverage to date? If yes, please list the sources and briefly describe relevant coverage. *100 word maximum.*

A press release was put out by the STAR Community organization in June of 2015, recognizing Palm Bay as the first municipality from Florida to receive recognition from STAR communities.

12. Please provide web links where the innovation can be seen/tested (in the case of something that is web-based) *100 word maximum.*

The City of Palm Bay STAR Score sheet can be found at the following link:
<https://reporting.starcommunities.org/communities/71-florida-palm-bay>

The City's website is www.palmbayflorida.org.

13. Please provide any key references and their contact information who can be interviewed/called to discuss the innovation and its impact. *100 word maximum.*

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14. You've been to a lot of conferences. TLG should be a unique experience for everyone. Describe how your case study presentation will be different than other conference presentations. *200 word maximum.*

- How will you make the session creative and unique?
- How do you plan to be both entertaining and educational?
- Include a description of how your session will facilitate group activities and/or interaction.

To make the session creative and unique, we will focus on the need to identify partners within the community that may be working to accomplish similar goals related to sustainability. It will be important to illustrate the need to "take inventory" within a community and define the community's challenges and assets. Collaboration should grow exponentially once relationships are formed and synergy is developed among participants in the community. We

would like to demonstrate this by creating a “city” or “community” at each table (maximum of 10 participants per table) with each participant representing an entity of the community (i.e., city/county government, businesses, schools, hospital, HOAs, etc.).

In order to make the presentation educational and entertaining the groups will then be challenged to accomplish a specific objective related to community sustainability. Each “city” or table would be given specific challenges and assets and will have to work collaboratively to meet these objectives. This exercise should help demonstrate both the challenges and rewards of partnerships and collaboration within the community.

In addition to encouraging participation and capturing feedback, we will present questions to the audience throughout the presentation using electronic polling devices. Questions related to their community’s sustainability efforts will be presented, and participants will submit their answers electronically for real time feedback.

15. Anything else you would like to add? *200 word maximum.*