



Downtown Clermont Updates



We have been working toward helping the downtown. Some of the behind the scenes things that help with business recruitment do take time. But in the last year, here's what we have accomplished and what we're working on:

- For new business coming into existing units, no additional parking will be required for a change of use (including restaurants);
- Sidewalk sandwich boards can be used;
- Small tables & chairs can also be used;
- City representative on the CDP board to help promote and create events downtown;
- Code changes to be proposed allowing restaurants as permitted uses (no CUP);
- Increase the requirement for a CUP from 3,000 sq. ft. to 10,000 sq. ft. to make it easier for larger retailers to develop;
- Marketing the vacant lots downtown to developers for residential and commercial uses;
- Eighth St. Gateway signs – 3 conceptual drawings being reviewed by the CDP and the City Council. Re-branding of the City will help with marketing the downtown and waterfront.
- Kiosk sign boards have also been approved by Council and are getting final designs. Branding has delayed these for about 2 months.
- Working on new parking lots through public/private ventures.
- New decorative poles with STOP signs and new **Blue** street signs have been installed in 18 intersections throughout the downtown.
- New directional signage from the South Lake Trail to the Historic Downtown have been added.
- Impact Fees – The Impact fee Study was completed and approved by City Council which reduces or eliminate fees for change of uses downtown, provided the meter size stays the same. This is a major change that will help businesses!
- Façade Improvement Grant Program – we still have businesses taking advantage of this program too. *The Lab – Hair Studio*, *The Barn Yarn* and *Tattletale Portable Alarm Systems* just completed their major renovation. This also shows support of our downtown that has pumped over \$150,000 worth of renovations into downtown Clermont since the program began.
- The City Manager has initiated a new Downtown & Waterfront Task Force to work on projects and promotion of the downtown and waterfront which will add more focus to the core of the city. A healthy downtown reflects a healthy city, and we are growing businesses here in Clermont.
- Online permitting for commercial and residential building permit will be available in the fall of 2014, making development reviews and approval easier and faster.
- Economic Development Dept., website provides multiple links for businesses assistance.

- A new aerial video of the downtown Montrose Street just before the Farmers Market on Sunday morning just before opening has been filmed. This shows the size of the market. We have also completed the aerial filming for the Waterfront area. Both are being edited and will go on YouTube in late May 2014 with a link provided on the City's Downtown & Waterfront section of the City web site: www.cityofclermontfl.com

Some businesses that come to downtowns do not always succeed, simply because of the type of business and the clientele they may try to attract. As you know, there's never a clear way to predict success. Over the last year we've gained nine (9) new businesses downtown. Downtown Clermont also has one of the highest occupancy rates in central Florida.

Improvements and changes are occurring for the downtown area all the time, and they are discussed at Council and with the CDP. The key is to continue to be involved and make suggestions. Not everything can be done, but we do make progress, and we're "*Open for Business*".