

East Gateway District

The East Gateway District is bounded by Drew Street on the north, Highland Avenue on the east, Missouri Avenue on the west and Court Street on the south and is shown on Map 8, page 57. This District is comprised of 686 parcels totaling 175.6 acres and represents 32.5 percent of the Downtown area.

Existing Character

East Gateway is generally characterized by a mixed land use pattern of residential housing interspersed with pockets of poorly maintained rental properties and outdated strip commercial. This District struggles with a negative image of crime due to the location of problematic uses such as day labor facilities, old motels and social service agencies that provide services to the homeless population. The commercial sector is burdened with a declining business base, an array of deteriorating infrastructure, a mismatch of uses, and an increasing number of vacant storefronts. Relatively well-maintained small professional offices and St. Cecilia's Catholic School anchor the southern edge of the East Gateway.

District Vision

Uses

It is envisioned that the East Gateway will be a vibrant, stable, diverse neighborhood defined by its unique cultural base and mixed land uses. It will continue to be developed as a low and medium density residential neighborhood supported with neighborhood commercial and professional offices concentrated along the major corridors of Cleveland Street, Gulf to Bay Boulevard, Court Street and Missouri Avenue. The areas northeast of Gulf to Bay Boulevard and north of Cleveland Street and east of Hillcrest Avenue should be maintained as a primarily low density, low-rise residential neighborhood. The areas southwest of Gulf to Bay Boulevard, south of Cleveland Street, and north of Cleveland Street west of Hillcrest Avenue are appropriate for medium- and high-density multi-family residential. Institutional uses should remain primarily south of Cleveland Street.

Function

Although the East Gateway District is predominantly a residential neighborhood, it will be the primary entrance to the Downtown Core once the new Memorial Causeway Bridge opens. Consequently, this presents an opportunity to define and improve the function of this District with attractive streetscape and landscaping elements along with appropriate wayfinding signage.

- Policy 2: The residential base including rental properties should be stabilized by providing for an improved mix of affordable and market-rate housing options including infill developments, rehabilitations, homeownership and rental housing choices.
- Policy 3: The expansion of the existing Clearwater Homeless Intervention Project (CHIP) facilities should be supported as a Downtown “campus” that will address the emergency and transitional housing needs of the Downtown homeless (within a structured/supervised program), and which will prevent future intrusion of scattered homeless facilities throughout the neighborhood.
- Policy 4: The concentration of problematic uses, especially day labor facilities, should be reduced through voluntary relocation or amortization.
- Policy 5: The rehabilitation of existing motels into residential apartments shall be prohibited.
- Policy 6: Foster a sense of neighborhood cohesion through urban design elements, as well as through the creation of neighborhood associations.
- Policy 7: Attract and assist existing retail and personal service establishments in order to create neighborhood employment opportunities.
- Policy 8: New development on Gulf to Bay Boulevard shall be oriented toward the Street to encourage pedestrian activity.
- Policy 9: Evaluate limited expansions of the Commercial and Downtown zoning District boundaries on Gulf to Bay Boulevard and Cleveland Street that may create opportunities for commercial expansions and/or redevelopment that is consistent with Community Development Code requirements.
- Policy 10: Residential development fronting on Cleveland Street may only be permitted if part of a mixed use development.
- Policy 11: Encourage the assembly of vacant and underutilized properties, as well as the demolition of deteriorated buildings to accommodate redevelopment projects that meet Clearwater Community Development Code standards.
- Policy 12: Encourage the adaptive re-use of underutilized buildings in the event redevelopment is not feasible.
- Policy 13: Provide neighborhood-wide education programs relating to housing maintenance and life safety issues prior to conducting any systematic code enforcement program.