



In an effort to better serve the local communities in Pinellas County, Forward Pinellas provides technical assistance through the Knowledge Exchange Series Program. We are conducting research and providing findings on topics that shape the way Pinellas County redevelops. For more information on the Knowledge Exchange Series, please visit forwardpinellas.org.

Microbreweries as Catalysts for Downtown Redevelopment

Microbreweries (and related uses like brewpubs, micro-distilleries and micro-wineries) are becoming increasingly popular in Pinellas County and around the country. These businesses are thriving in compact, walkable downtowns and town centers, creating attractive destinations that are becoming catalysts for revitalization. An atypical combination of commercial and industrial uses in a single building, microbreweries can also present zoning challenges, particularly in smaller communities. To help meet these challenges, Forward Pinellas conducted several case studies of local approaches to regulating and incentivizing microbreweries. We interviewed municipal planning staff and brewery owners, and reviewed local land development regulations to compile a set of best practices.

Best Practices

Become familiar with the regulatory environment: It is important to assist new microbrewery owners in understanding the current regulations at the local, state and federal level.

Be open-minded: Gain a full understanding of all the details regarding the proposed brewery. Ask the business owner to be specific so that you can understand the impacts to your city. Communities around Pinellas County are benefiting economically from microbreweries in their areas. Owners are investing in and repurposing buildings, in addition to drawing locals to walkable areas of their communities. Work with them to achieve common goals.

Ask detailed questions:

- What are the annual production limits?
- What kinds of deliveries are coming to the property?
- What times of day are those deliveries being made?
- How does federal tax law influence the operation?
- How are used kegs stored when returned to the property?

Offer various incentives:

- Facade grants
- Historic tax abatements
- Off-street parking flexibility
- Restaurant interior buildout grants
- Impact fee credits



Toolkit - Forward Pinellas staff have compiled examples of several Pinellas County local government definitions and regulations as a reference for other communities. These examples are available on our website under this series topic. In addition, a Powerpoint presentation, video and blog post provide more information on our findings!

Countywide Impacts - While the Countywide Rules provide some category flexibility, they do not define microbreweries. Next steps will include working with Planners Advisory Committee on possible amendments to the Countywide Plan.

Questions on our Knowledge Exchange Series topic? Contact us at 727-464-8250.